



SRI LANKA UPRISING PANICS RULING CLASS

Protests reach boiling point >>Page 20 Neoliberal debt crisis >>Page 17

Fighting to control our fertility—the history of forced sterilisation

>>Pages 14&15

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Thieves fall out as Johnson goes, but...



THEY ALL WANT YOU TO PAY FOR THE CRISIS

Prices up, wages down—we need to fight back >>Pages 2 to 6

RACISM

Sukhdev Reel on her long fight to get justice

SUKHDEV REEL lost her son Ricky in what campaigners suspect was a racist attack in Kingston upon Thames in 1997.

In a new book, Sukhdev writes about her campaign to find out the truth—against obstruction by the police.

She spoke to Socialist Worker about her story.

>>Pages 14&15

LGBT+



Rage and radicalism on Trans+ Pride

ANGER AND militancy filled the streets of London last Saturday as around 15,000 people took part in the fourth Trans+ Pride in the capital.

Marchers celebrated being LGBT+ and firmly demanded their rights. It showed the fight for trans rights is more determined than ever.

>>Page 6

ENVIRONMENT

More oil rigs for the rich, climate crisis for the rest

US PRESIDENT Joe Biden has signalled his support for a massive new oil drilling project. Yet the deadly price of fossil fuels was underlined when a glacier dramatically collapsed, killing 11 people.

Climate activists are fighting back with militant tactics.

>>Page 7



THE THINGS
THEY SAY

‘It was my job, my duty, my obligation to you’

Boris Johnson tries to explain why he tried to hang on as prime minister until the last minute ...

‘Them’s the breaks’

...until he knew the game was up

‘I have friends who are aristocrats, I have friends who are upper class, I have friends who are working class... Well, not working class’

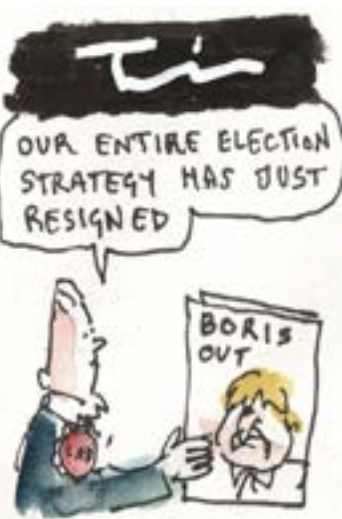
Rishi Sunak admits not having any working class friends during a BBC TV programme on the middle classes in 2001

‘What was he meant to do — strike up a friendship with the blokes who mowed the lawns of his school?’

Right wing magazine The Spectator defends Sunak’s choice of friends

‘Well of course I’m talking to Tony Blair, I’m talking to Gordon Brown’

Former director of public prosecutions Keir Starmer defends the war criminals on Channel 4 this week



by NICK CLARK

TORY MPs have begun deciding who the next prime minister will be through a process of backstabbing, mud-slinging and scapegoating.

The first official list of candidates to replace Boris Johnson was set to be confirmed as Socialist Worker went to press.

But days of anonymous slander and briefing since Johnson announced his resignation last week set the tone for what one MP called “the dirtiest campaign in history.”

The Sunday Times newspaper reported that at least two leadership campaigns had sent the Labour Party dossiers containing “lurid allegations” about their rivals.

“The documents include a catalogue of claims about the likely runners and riders, including allegations about their private lives and financial arrangements, among them the use of tax dodges and loans,” the newspaper said.

“At least one private investigator has been hired to dig into some of the candidates’ financial arrangements.

“Details of alleged extramarital affairs are also being widely shared with Labour by Tories desperate to discredit their opponents.

“Hostile briefings between the rival camps raises the prospect of blue-on-blue attacks escalating during the course of the contest.”

Cheats

That’s just a glimpse inside the murky and vicious methods that the tax dodgers, cheats and millionaires of the Tory Party will use to choose who next gets to rule us.

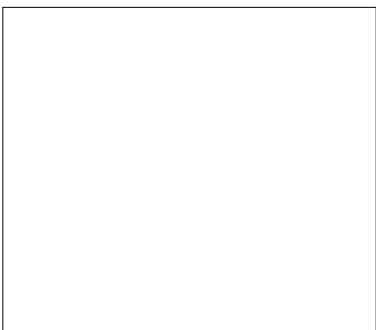
It’s about more than simply personal nastiness.

It’s a bitter fight over who the Tories think can stitch back together the support that Johnson lost, and lead them out of crisis.

As one unnamed “senior MP” said, “Everybody is desperate for this sordid period of our party’s history to end and for us to elect a new leader with bags of integrity who can draw a line under this disastrous episode. “But that does mean that scandal now has a currency in the forthcoming leadership elections, which will likely make this the dirtiest campaign in history.”

Some of the candidates still standing as Socialist Worker went to press hoped to win over Tory MPs

Tory civil war Worst people in world vie for ‘best job in the world’



RISHI SUNAK—the super rich former chancellor’s resignation triggered Boris Johnson’s downfall

and big business with promises to manage the economic crisis in their interest (see right).

Others preferred to lean more heavily into the racism, homophobia, transphobia and bigotry—so-called “culture war” issues—that Johnson used to prop his government up.

Those two broad, warring factions were set to whittle themselves down to two candidates with a series of ballots by Tory MPs.

In rules only decided on Tuesday morning, candidates needed to get the backing of 20 other MPs by Tuesday evening to get on the

ballot. A vote of Tory MPs was then set to take place on Wednesday of this week, where anyone with less than 30 MPs votes is knocked out.

The final two candidates—the ones left standing after a series of knockout ballots among Tory MPs—then stand for election in a vote of Tory members.

Attacking

A survey of party members by the Tory blog Conservative Home on Monday showed overwhelming support for Penny Mordaunt, and Kemi Badenoch whose campaign focussed heavily on attacking anti-racism and “identity politics.”

Whoever emerges from the quagmire, the election process means the next prime minister will be chosen by a tiny group of some of the worst people you can think of.

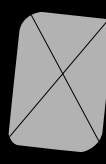
That’s unless we can wreck the whole government with strikes, protests and resistance big enough that none of the Tories can handle it.

“Its a bitter fight over who the Tories think can stitch back the support Johnson lost

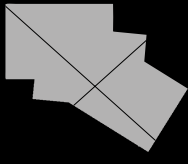
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Tory hopefuls unite over Rwanda deportations

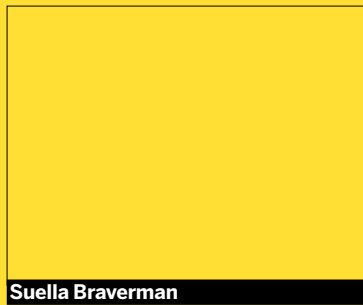
ALL THE Tory leadership candidates have pledged to keep the Rwanda deportations plan.

Rishi Sunak said that he would send refugees to Rwanda. A spokesperson for the former chancellor said, “Rishi signed off and funded the Asylum Partnership Agreement with Rwanda, and now he just wants to make sure that it works.”

So did Jeremy Hunt, who pledged to “make it work”. The first flight was due to leave on 14 June, but was stopped by a last minute legal intervention.

The Tories try to portray any legal challenge to deportations as a sign of “elite judges” thwarting the will of the “British people”.

And now attorney general Suella Braverman has vowed to leave the European Convention on Human Rights in the wake of the European court’s intervention. That would go further than the government’s policy to replace the Human



Rights Act with a British Bill of Rights, but staying in the convention. Braverman said, “When people voted for Brexit they expected we would take back control of our borders.

“It is unacceptable that a foreign court had stopped the Rwandan deportation flight. The British people should be able to vote for their priorities and expect that their government can carry them out.

“This is the definition of taking back control.”

The High Court adjourned a legal challenge to the Rwanda plan on Monday until 5 September.

Tories promise tax cuts for corporations as cost of living crisis deepens for millions

WHILE RIVAL Tory candidates promise tax cuts for the rich, even food banks are running out of supplies.

The Parish Trust in Caerphilly, south Wales, had to close its doors last week because its shelves and tables lay empty.

Founder Reverend Dean Roberts said, “While some people might donate food to us, they’re donating less than they used to.

“People have had Covid, then furlough, then redundancies and now the cost of living crisis—so we’re really seeing demand going up across the board.

“We’re seeing a lot of families coming through, even with the Free School Meals scheme.”

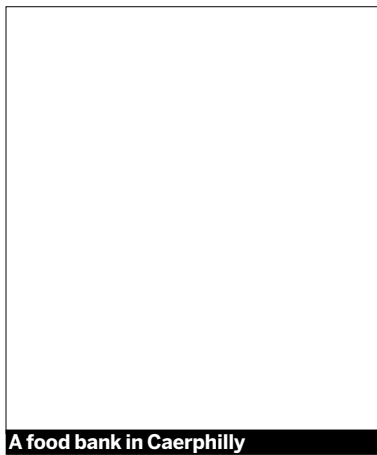
Poverty

Brutal Tory policies and the cost of living crisis are causing child poverty rates to rise rapidly, according to new analysis.

The north east of England has become the region with the highest rates of child poverty, according to End Child Poverty, a coalition of charities.

Poverty rates in Wales and the north east of England are higher than before the pandemic. In Wales child poverty was up by 34 percent in 2020-21 compared with the year before. In north east England, 38 percent of children lived below the poverty line in 2020-21 compared with 37 percent the previous year.

Joseph Howes, End Child Poverty



chair, said, “It still feels like we are on the edge of a precipice. There is significant concern that the numbers of children in poverty will now rise again sharply with families facing huge cost increases in the coming months.”

And people are so desperate to fill up their cars, in the face of rising fuel costs, that theft at the pumps is up by 61 percent.

More than two million people have missed or defaulted on at least one bill, rent or mortgage payment in the last year. The research from consumer group Which, published last Wednesday, is another sign of the social emergency facing working class people.

Some 64 percent of people in households with an income of up to £21,000 said they’d had to make cutbacks. One woman on a low

income of under £21,000 says “the prices of everything are rising so steeply”. “But wages and benefits are not,” she told the researchers from Which.

Yet all Tory leadership candidates offer are tax cuts for the rich and bosses. Sajid Javid has pledged to cancel a rise in corporation tax planned by former chancellor Rishi Sunak, and said he wants to reduce it by 1 percent every year.

Promises

Jeremy Hunt wants to go even further and has promised to cut corporation tax to 15 percent in time for the next Autumn budget.

And Nadhim Zahawi, Grant Shapps and Liz Truss have all made similar promises.

Some leadership hopefuls are attacking National Insurance to outmanoeuvre Sunak and pose as on the side of ordinary people.

As chancellor of the exchequer, Sunak bumped up national insurance contributions (NICs) by £1.25 in the pound through a “health and social care levy”. The plan amounted to class war to make ordinary people pay for the social care crisis, and hit people in April.

The Tories have now raised the threshold for paying NICs to £12,570. And Sajid Javid, Liz Truss and Tom Tugendhat have all said they want to see the National Insurance rise scrapped.

But they offer no solutions to the cost of living crisis as inflation reaches almost 12 percent.



Liz Truss (she/her) has pledged to stamp on ‘woke identity politics’

Rich, racist bigots stand for the leadership

RISHI SUNAK and his wife, Akshata Murthy, are on the Sunday Times Rich List with a fortune of £730 million.

Sunak benefited from Murty’s “non dom” status, which allowed her to avoid £20 million in taxes.

Penny Mordaunt served as a junior minister under David Cameron.

She led attacks on firefighters’ pensions, wanting them to work until they are 60, and on disability benefits.

Liz Truss is obsessed with stopping imports of French cheese—and French philosophers.

She blames them for “woke” culture” and the “zero sum game of identity politics” with its “illiberalism”. But as foreign

secretary she described the thoroughly illiberal Saudi Arabia as a “partner” and “ally” while its bombs pounded civilians in Yemen.

Suella Braverman is a right wing authoritarian who promised to “solve the problem of boats crossing the Channel” and to “get rid of all of this woke rubbish”.

In 2019 she claimed, “We are engaged in a battle against cultural Marxism”—echoing a far right, antisemitic conspiracy theory.

Nadhim Zahawi is a multi-millionaire. During the Greensill lobbying scandal he deleted all messages between himself and former prime minister David Cameron and refused to answer why. During his time as MP, he joined Gulf Keystone Petroleum

as a part-time chief strategy officer—and was paid £1.3 million.

He still claimed 89p for a stapler, 63p for pens, 53p for a hole punch and 31p for paper clips in expenses.

Tom Tugendhat is a champion of extra money for the military and the West’s wars in the Middle East.

His love for warmongers extends to Saudi Arabian crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman. He said, “He is rightly showing a vision for Saudi Arabia that sees her taking her place as a player in the global economy.”

Sajid Javid was a board member of Deutsche Bank, earning roughly £3 million a year, before becoming an MP. He held non-domiciled status for six years to avoid paying tax during this time.

Johnson on his way out. Now let's get all the scumbags

by TOMÁŠ TENGELY-EVANS

BORIS JOHNSON'S resignation and slow exit from office has been marked by the bitter infighting and government chaos that shaped his tenure.

One senior government figure said, "This is not an administration that is going to go quietly. There is a lot of anger about how this all happened."

Rather than tackling the cost of living crisis, Johnson is said to be using his last moments in office to scupper Rishi Sunak's chance of becoming leader.

"It is clear that much of it [anger] will now focus on Rishi. It is all very Trumpian," said the source.

Even now, fresh revelations about Johnson's behaviour continue to emerge.

Two days after his resignation, it was revealed that, while London mayor, Johnson lobbied for a job for a woman he was in a sexual relationship with.

Succeeds

It's a fitting end for the Tory prime minister. He was finally forced to quit after a series of resignations from senior ministers, who feared the growing anger against the government.

Whoever succeeds Johnson will find it hard to regroup the coalition that brought him to office in the 2019 general election.

It included the vast bulk of big business—naturally on the side of the Tories and fearful of Jeremy Corbyn's Labour Party.

He also appealed to sections of working class people, who were angry at the way politicians wanted to trample on their votes to leave the European Union (EU).

His fake "anti-establishment" rhetoric attacked unelected judges and business, allowing him to pose as an insurgent outsider.

This frayed as the slew of partygate revelations over Christmas spurred anger among ordinary people.

Downing Street launched

"Operation Save Big Dog"—throwing staffers under the bus in an attempt to deflect blame from Johnson.

At the same time "Operation Red Meat"—announcing a series of nasty, right wing policies—was supposed to shore up support for Johnson among the Tory base.

But the stench from Downing Street's vomit-stained rooms kept coming.

In June Johnson only narrowly survived a vote of no confidence among his own MPs.

The now-worried backbenchers had always been ready to make excuses for the government during the pandemic—and the scandals over corrupt contracts and partygate—so long as they kept winning elections under his leadership.

Defeats

But last month the Tories suffered two shattering by-election defeats in Wakefield and Tiverton and Honiton.

Johnson's successor will be without a mandate, and be unable to capitalise on the same "anti-establishment" rhetoric as much. The Tories are presiding over one of the biggest social emergencies as prices soar and the value of wages and benefits plummet.

They also face a potential resurgence in class struggle after the rail workers' strikes—which were immensely popular among working class people.

One cabinet minister told the bosses' Financial Times newspaper recently that the government is "walking a tightrope" of keeping pay down without risking multiple strikes.

"If we get this wrong, we risk going into a de facto general strike that will create further turmoil that risks grinding the whole economy to a halt," they said.

It's everyone's job to make the Tory fears a reality.

Johnson's going, the Tory party is in civil war, the bosses fear workers' anger—now is the time to strike out the lot. Let's raise hell against the Tories, all their vile policies and the bosses.

JOHNSON'S DEPARTURE isn't primarily about Tory infighting, it's about government attacks on us all

'Herd immunity' to 'protective rings'—Tories got Covid wrong

BORIS JOHNSON'S defenders are keen to insist that their leader got all the "big decisions" right, especially when it came to coronavirus. What a ludicrous declaration.

Since the start of the pandemic, almost 200,000 people in Britain have died with Covid. That's around 25 percent more than died in France, which has a similar size population.

From the very start Johnson was in denial about coronavirus. He and his ministers were convinced that letting the disease spread unhindered would lead to "herd immunity".

They understood that would mean old and sick people would die. But "economically productive" people would simply get over Covid as they get over the flu.

But Covid is not flu. The Tory approach meant the Britain was late to lockdown, which in turn helped spread infections and death.

As hospitals filled with seriously ill Covid patients it was

clear there was a devastating shortage of PPE protective equipment.

In a panic, ministers opened a "VIP lane" for entrepreneurs with Tory connections. Meanwhile, NHS staff—particularly black and Asian NHS staff—went without PPE, or were forced to improvise using bin bags.

Despite Tory claims to have thrown a "protective ring" around care homes, the opposite was true. At the height of the first wave of infections elderly hospital patients were discharged into care homes.

In a bid to slow Covid's spread, the government announced its "Test and Trace" system. Johnson celebrated it as "world beating".

But the system was chaotic from the start, relying on private sector rogues with a well-earned reputation for ripping off the public.

Johnson points to Britain's vaccination programme as proof of his success. But the programme's early progress was a reflection of the dedication of the scientists and health workers who developed and delivered the vaccine.

The new wave of Covid today hitting Britain can thank the Tories for the easy ride it's having. They abolished all Covid restrictions in February this year.

At every stage, Johnson has put both his own political needs and those of the profit-makers above keeping the public safe.

The price for that failure can be measured in many ways—including unnecessary deaths, long Covid, and thousands of broken health workers.

It is also the reason why so many millions of people will never again trust a word that comes from Johnson's mouth.

A perfect storm of bullies and bosses in Tory Brexit

THE 2019 election was a perfect example of how Boris Johnson operated.

He ruthlessly pushed aside prime minister Theresa May and pro-EU Tories and staked everything on mobilising around "Get Brexit Done".

His gamble involved the seemingly un-Tory programme of attacking judges and multinationals as representatives of an undemocratic elite.

Johnson's "fuck business" outburst during Brexit negotiations was symbolic of his readiness to ditch bits of Tory ideology in order to batter his way into Downing Street. The only principle was to win.

But Johnson's 2019 coalition was fragile. It included much big business and sections of workers.

But the crisis over the European Union and the Northern Ireland protocol shows that Johnson had merely fudged the EU

questions—rather than deal with the problems of Tory Brexit.

The protocol was a last-minute compromise to get Brexit through.

Border

It effectively created a trade border down the Irish Sea between Northern Ireland and Britain.

But it allows free trade between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic.

It was supposed to solve the hard border problem by imposing checks on some goods

entering Northern Ireland from Britain. Johnson signed up and declared it a triumph, ignoring the promises he had previously made to Northern Irish Unionists that he would do no such thing.

Other borders also saw a level of chaos as shortages of workers and bureaucratic incompetence run rife.

The combination of profit-hungry bosses and the Tories meant getting Brexit done won them votes, but it didn't resolve the crisis the way they hoped.

Lorries queue for miles at port of Dover

Strikes and protests, such as this one in Wigan last month, are the way to win

Starmer is the Tories' shield

LABOUR LEADER Keir Starmer has called for a general election.

And he says, if the Tories don't get rid of Johnson, he'll push for a parliamentary vote of no confidence.

Despite the focus of politicians and most of the media, the roots of the Tory crisis are not simply the fallout from those at the top.

It's that the loathing at Johnson among ordinary people over a myriad of linked issues means the

Tories can no longer rely on the support he rallied behind them.

For Labour's leaders this is all a big parliamentary game.

The last thing they want are strikes and protests getting in the way.

And especially ones that make them choose between being a "serious party of government" and supporting workers.

So they'll appeal to union leaders to hold off just a few more weeks and months

for the chance of an early election and a possible Labour government.

Both Labour and the Tories would like to keep the government crisis contained inside parliament, away from ordinary people.

But this is the best moment to force our way in through the cracks, with protests, strikes and resistance.

We should demand Johnson goes now—and takes the rest of the Tories with him.

Socialist Worker
WHAT WE THINK

DON'T BE A SPECTATOR—TIME TO REVOLT AGAINST TORIES

OUR SIDE can stop the Tories in their tracks—but only if we massively up the level of resistance.

A summer of discontent—of strikes, protests and rebellion—could not only force Boris Johnson to leave Downing Street.

It would make sure that whoever follows Johnson is faced with revolt from day one, and help to drive out the whole lot of rotten Tories.

Johnson's resignation has plunged the Tories into civil war with a collection of rich racists vying for the leadership. But they are united around one thing. That the only solution to the crisis facing the Tory party, and British capitalism, is to make working class people pay.

So it's everyone's job to make sure working class people capitalise on the Tory crisis, exploiting the weakness and division on their side.

Crucially, this means not being spectators to the Tory crisis or relying on the parliamentary manoeuvres of the Labour Party.

Keir Starmer's Labour Party had tabled a vote of no confidence against Johnson, with MPs set to

vote on Wednesday of this week. We want Johnson to go. But where was a no-confidence vote when tens of thousands of people died at the height of the pandemic?

Instead, Starmer promised to be a "constructive opposition" to the Tories. He spent the pandemic attacking the left and cosying up to the British state and big business to prove Labour's no real threat to the system.

Labour offers no real solutions to the crisis facing millions of working class people across Britain.

Instead, we need to up the tempo of resistance on the picket lines and streets. It's hugely welcome that thousands of Aslef

“
The Labour Party offers solutions to the crisis facing the working class

and TSSA union members have voted to join the rail workers' struggle. It comes after the three successful strikes by RMT union members at Network Rail and 13 train operating companies last month.

They won support in the labour movement and wider society, with one poll showing 58 percent thought the strikes were "justified". That's because working class people across Britain are facing a social emergency as prices soar.

The strikes became a beacon for everyone who'd had enough of Johnson, the Tories and all of their rotten policies.

The leaders of the rail unions need to call hard-hitting strikes now. And the other union leaders should mobilise for a fightback to win inflation-busting pay increases. And, if they don't, rank and file activists have to push them into action.

In the other ballots for strikes due to take place, activists have to mobilise the biggest possible yes votes for action.

Let's all get onto the streets, let's strike, let's rage against the rotten system—and fight to impose socialist solutions onto their crisis.

BRITAIN'S AFGHAN WAR CRIMES

BRITISH SPECIAL forces killed hundreds of people on night raids in Afghanistan. They killed detainees and unarmed men in suspicious circumstances, according to a BBC investigation.

Newly obtained military reports suggest that one unit may have killed 54 people this way in one six-month tour.

Members of Britain's Special Air Service (SAS) covered up evidence that they killed unarmed Afghan civilians in cold blood.

They left weapons behind

to make the victims look like insurgents.

They also falsified mission reports in a scandal that the government has tried to keep secret.

General Sir Mark Carleton-Smith, the former head of Special Forces, was briefed about the alleged killings.

But he did not pass on the evidence to the Royal Military Police, even after they began a murder investigation into the SAS.

Squadrons were competing with each other to get the most kills.

The squadron scrutinised by the BBC was trying to achieve a higher body count than the one it had replaced.

The US-led and British backed campaign that lasted two decades in Afghanistan was a complete failure.

But it was also despite the lies the government and the media told a brutal bloody war of occupation.

The crimes of the soldiers are the crimes of the political system that sent them to be part of an imperial project that cost a quarter of a million lives.

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For updates and analysis on the stories that matter go to socialistworker.co.uk/breakfastinred

socialistworker.co.uk

Our website brings together stories of struggles the mainstream won't report. It helps you find socialist meetings, protests and strikes—and the Marxist ideas and activism to change the world.

ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



Taking the measure of Johnson's regime

BORIS JOHNSON'S fall confirms both the strength and the weakness of the British political system.

Strength—Johnson tried to cling to office appealing to his “mandate from 14 million voters” in the December 2019 general election.

But in Britain prime ministers depend on the support of a majority of the House of Commons. This support is expressed through the cabinet. Johnson was the fourth prime minister of the neoliberal era to be brought down by a cabinet rebellion—like Margaret Thatcher, Tony Blair, and Theresa May before him.

By comparison only three—John Major, Gordon Brown, and David Cameron—fell through losing popular votes.

This system allows ruling parties to rid themselves comparatively easily of leaders who have become liabilities. And—despite his efforts to defy political gravity—it worked against Johnson.

Weakness—he leaves behind him a shattered Tory party. Thatcher's fall in 1990 created a lasting obsession with the European Union that culminated in the 2016 Brexit referendum. This brought down Cameron and gave Johnson his opportunity. He overturned May for being too compromising with Brussels. To deliver the hard Brexit sought by the Tory right—and also by the European Commission—he purged the pro-European wing of the party.

This reduced the talent pool at the top of the Tory party, which helps to explain the bunch of clowns that are now running for the party leadership. Notice, however, that almost all are promising to cut taxes. This shows the continuing ideological hold of Thatcherism on Tory back-benchers—the fantasy that they are a party of “small government”.

But Johnson has taken the Tories a long way from Thatcherism. This is partly because he won the election by targeting the so-called “Red Wall”—ex-industrial, traditionally Labour seats in the north of England that voted Leave in 2016. The Toy MPs who won these constituencies have, for example, been a strong lobby for measures to address the cost of living crisis.

This crisis has come on the back on the emergency created by the Covid pandemic. Then-chancellor Rishi Sunak suspended the Thatcherite rule book, increasing public spending massively to stave off economic collapse. This was financed by the Bank of England creating money and lending to the government—a major crime according to neoliberal orthodoxy.

In his latest package in May, and under pressure from Johnson, Sunak continued in this vein. He allocated nearly £10 billion to help the poorest households with higher energy bills, financed by a windfall tax on oil, gas, and electricity companies. “Mr Sunak is engaging in some serious redistribution from rich to poor—albeit against a backdrop of rising inequality,” commented Paul Johnson of the Institute for Fiscal Studies.

Difficulties

This is an exaggeration, but it underlines the difficulties the Tories face. Under Johnson, the share of taxation in national income has risen sharply. It is projected to reach 36.3 percent in 2026-7, the highest level since the late 1940s.

This is anathema to most Tory backbenchers. In his efforts to hang onto office, Johnson was trying to ingratiate himself with them by promising to cut taxes. This seems to have been the issue that precipitated Sunak's resignation. He is against financing tax cuts by higher borrowing. For the Tory rank and file the solution is to reduce public spending and shrink the state. Hence the promises of tax cuts in the leadership contest.

The problem is that this debate bears no relationship with reality. Capitalism in Britain and globally is grappling with an apparently endless series of emergencies—economic crisis, pandemic, war, soaring food and energy prices.

Who knows what's coming next? This situation requires a bigger and stronger state, not the smaller and weaker one desired by the back benches. Johnson's chaotic opportunism took the British state in the direction it needed to go.

The Tories are lucky that they face a clueless Labour opposition dominated by Blairites who are desperate to prove their respectability and lack of radicalism. Johnson's removal has deprived them of the strongest argument there was for voting Labour. The Tories' tradition of renewing themselves by decapitating unpopular leaders may work for them.



TRANS+ PRIDE gets bigger every year

PICTURE: SOCIALIST WORKER

London Trans+ Pride says, ‘We are not going anywhere’

by ISABEL RINGROSE

ANGER AND militancy filled the streets of London last Saturday as around 15,000 people took part in the fourth Trans+ Pride in the capital. Protesters celebrated being LGBT+ and firmly demanded their rights.

The pride started at Wellington Arch and marched to Soho Square for a rally. Em hadn't been to Trans Pride before. “I came out as non-binary last year,” they told Socialist Worker. “It's great to meet people and also protest for our rights.”

“Conversion therapy makes me feel physically ill. It's one step forward and ten steps back. I live in a Tory area and I feel like a spectacle.”

“So to come here as part of a collective is powerful. It's easy to feel deflated and be cynical. When we come together we are powerful.”

Em added that it's important to see people at Trans+ Pride ready to fight, “Rather than hop on pride for the sesh.”

Placards on the demonstration read, “We're not going anywhere,” and, “Trans healthcare saves lives”. And, “There is no LGB without the T,” and, “There would be no pride without black trans women.”

GMB, NEU and Unison union delegations with

banners also joined the pride. Neil is a teacher and NEU member in east London. “It's important that we're here because we represent and teach lots of children,” he said.

“We are standing up for them and our members who are also oppressed and dismissed.”

Protesters made clear that trans rights are human rights—and changes to trans health care is crucial. This includes making hormone drugs free and NHS-run gender identity clinics accessible. Bee told Socialist



Demanding liberation

Worker, “Trans rights means changes to health care.” They explained that wait times can mean trans people waiting for the best part of a decade. “And referrals don't get passed on—or you have to start again if you change doctors,” they said.

Encourages

But Bee said, “A privileged few don't have to go through this if they can afford to go private—and this just encourages privatisation.”

They added that this is similar to accessing abortion. “People don't make the connection between these two struggles and they need to,” they said.

Millie said we need a fightback. “We're under mass attack worldwide and especially in Britain, with Conservative transphobia and on the left too,” they said.

They added that Trans+ Pride is rooted in protest and is “where Prides came from before they were co-opted by the corporations”. “But it's important for LGBT+ people to be joyful about who they are—it's a way to protest against the status-quo.”

In the face of the Tories' attacks, the fight for trans rights is angrier and more determined than ever. And the growing mobilisations of trans+ people on the streets shows the power militant Pride protests have.

London out for choice

PRO-CHOICE activists marched through central London last Saturday to defend abortion rights in Britain—and to show solidarity with protesters in the US.

Up to 1,500 people marched from Trafalgar Square to the US Embassy.

The quashing of Roe v Wade in the US means up to 20 states have already banned abortion, with others set to follow or bring in restrictions.

Protester Emily told Socialist Worker, “The

fact that laws can be taken away so easily is scary. So many places are banning abortion, it's absolutely unbelievable.”

Grace added, “The more we're out on the streets, the more it forces people to see that this is a real issue that they need to get behind. We can't be ignored then.”

Activists are gearing up to protest against the March for Life organised by anti-choice bigots on 3 September.

Read a longer report at socialistworker.co.uk

More oil rigs for rich, crisis for the rest

New fossil fuel projects are being approved despite climate catastrophe, says **Sophie Squire**

AS CLIMATE catastrophe claims some of its latest victims, world leaders continue their plot to keep burning fossil fuel capitalism ticking along.

US president Joe Biden signalled his support for a massive new oil drilling project in Alaska last week.

The ConocoPhillips project was first approved during the presidency of Donald Trump.

It was enthusiastically backed by Biden, but then blocked by a judge who said that the impact had not been adequately assessed.

To force the project through, the Biden administration issued new analysis on the project site last Friday.

The Department of the Interior said that the new oil field would produce over 180,000 barrels of crude oil a day. This would lead to 278 million metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions being emitted in its lifetime.

Biden tried to defend the opening of more fossil fuel infrastructure. He said that, because gasoline prices are rising, the bosses need to keep drilling. The deadly price of Biden's actions were underlined when a glacier dramatically collapsed on 3 July, killing 11 people.

A large chunk of the Marmolada glacier, east of Bolzano in the Dolomite mountains, broke off.

Avalanche

It caused an avalanche of snow, ice, rock and debris, which hit hikers on the mountain.

It is a sign of things to come. Rapidly melting glaciers in the European Alps will have terrible consequences for the millions that live there, with deadly floods and droughts becoming more common.

This is because gradual ice melt from glaciers forms much of the freshwater supply.

In the last 20 years, Italy has lost 25 percent of its water to shrinking glaciers.

The drought is causing crops to fail and has even put electricity supplies in danger as the country relies

GET INVOLVED

Two climate emergency groups are planning events in London this summer

● Extinction Rebellion is planning the next rebellion for Saturday 10 September

● It is fighting to get 3.5 percent of the population involved in its campaign

● Just Stop Oil is organising a London protest for Sat 23 July

● It is demanding that the government halts all future fossil fuel projects in Britain

on hydropower for over 40 percent of its energy needs.

Yet among the drive to planetary destruction at the top of society and the human cost at the bottom, there is a sense of resistance to climate catastrophe.

Activists from Just Stop Oil blocked the tracks of the British Grand Prix last Monday.

Other activists have continued a campaign of glueing themselves to famous and expensive paintings to demand the government stop all new oil projects.

Occupied

Hundreds of activists from Extinction Rebellion (XR) occupied the Aberpergwm mine near Glynneath in west Wales on Sunday.

XR members climbed to the top of the coal mine and blocked it so it couldn't be used.

In January, the British coal authority granted a license for the Aberpergwm coal mine to extract 42 million tonnes of coal.

Sean, who was part of the blockade, said, "The government has declared a climate emergency. It's time they started acting like it's an emergency."



On other pages...

Sri Lankan revolt takes on rulers
>>Pages 17&20

EXTINCTION REBELLION activists blockade the Aberpergwm mine

Grenfell fire inquiry hears harrowing stories of victims' final moments

THE GRENFELL Tower Inquiry is sharing the harrowing last moments of the victims of the west London tower block fire—and the failures that led to their deaths.

On Tuesday of last week, the inquiry heard an account of eight people who died sheltering in two flats on 23rd floor.

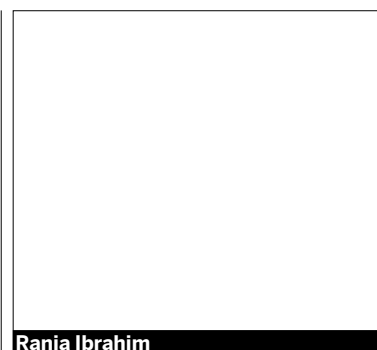
Seven of them died from inhalation of fire and toxic fumes, forensic experts explained.

The eighth, Mohamed Neda, fell to his death. Shortly before, he left a voicemail to his brother-in-law saying, "I am leaving this world, goodbye."

Mohamed's son and wife made a successful escape but he stayed with two residents, who had mobility impairments, and their visiting families.

One of these residents, Eslah Elgwahry, told Tory-run Kensington and Chelsea council in 2015 that she had a physical disability—but no evacuation plan was put in place.

Rania Ibrahim, a 31-year-old who came to London in 2009 from Egypt, died with her four-year-old and three-year-old daughters Fethia and Hania. They sheltered in their flat with three of their



Rania Ibrahim

neighbours. In a video from Facebook, Rania said, "The whole building is burning and we're on the top floor," and questioned how they could escape.

At 2.42am the fire brigade call operator said, "The safest place for you at the moment is in the flat." This was just after fire commanders had lifted the "stay put" policy.

Before 2.33am residents tried to go down the stairs. But "a male voice was heard to shout a command for residents to go back". "This may have been a firefighter," said Danny Friedman QC who is representing some families. Lawyers focussed this week on the

role of the London Fire Brigade. And they questioned why the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, the tower's landlords, put disabled residents on the upper floors of the block.

Meanwhile, it has been revealed that a Met police document predicted "crime and disorder" in the days after the blaze. It put this down to the fact that "the majority of those affected are believed to be coming from a Muslim cultural background".

The note assessed risks of "community tensions" in the week after the fire. It warned of outbreaks of crime if the full death toll was released. The Met has tried deny "any suggestion that Islamophobia affected its response to the tragedy".

Grenfell United, which represents bereaved and survivors said that officials from the council referred to them as "muzzies" and refused to go down to the tower because "it's like little Africa down there".

It said, "Maybe this is why half a decade later, there are still no charges. Maybe this is why justice for people from our class never gets anywhere."



Right drive Japan to military escalation after assassination

JAPAN'S FORMER prime minister, Shinzo Abe, was shot dead in Nara, Japan, while delivering a campaign speech last week.

The right wing figure was pronounced dead a few hours later—just two days before the House of Councillors election.

His death may have partly contributed to a landslide victory for Abe's party, the Liberal Democrats (LDP).

In initial counts of the votes, the LDP and its right wing coalition partner Komeito hold 146 seats in the 248-seat upper house as of Monday. The voter turnout was just over 50 percent.

Following Abe's assassination, one man, a former Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force sailor, was arrested for Abe's murder.

After spending months planning the attack, the shooter built a homemade gun from steel pipes and tape.

While Abe's assassination may have led his party to an election victory, people aren't united in love for the former prime minister.

Abe was prime minister from 2006 to 2007 and again from 2012 to 2020. He pushed neoliberal policies that ruined many working class people's lives.

As the pandemic hit in 2020, Abe's popularity fell to a point where he was forced to resign as prime minister.

During his time in office, workers were pushed hard, yet their pay stagnated.

A survey in 2017—conducted during Abe's leadership—found that staff in nearly 25 percent of Japanese firms work over 80 hours overtime a month, often unpaid.

The neoliberal system made many workers fear that unless they did so they would lose their jobs and end up homeless.

Competition

As prime minister, Abe was always clear in pushing a pro-war agenda, sending Japanese troops to Iraq whilst boosting nationalism that tried to deny Japan's wartime crimes.

Following his assassination, Abe's legacy of nationalism and imperialism is being replicated.

Current prime minister Fumio Kishida wants to revise Japan's post-second world war, so-called "pacifist constitution".

Article 9 of the constitution contains the vow to, "renounce war as the sovereign right of the nation."

The Japanese state has interpreted the line in many different ways but has remained unchanged since the constitution was rewritten in 1947.

This part of the constitution

prevented Japan from forming an official army.

But does currently have a de facto military force called the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (JSDF).

Spearheaded

Before his death and during his time as prime minister Abe spearheaded the campaign for constitutional change and to allow the JSDF to exist officially.

Constitutional change, significantly altering Article 9, will open the door for Japan's leaders to push for more war and imperialism.

Amid the war in Ukraine, prime minister Kishida has already been pushing to ramp up the country's defence capabilities.

On a trip to Singapore last month, Kishida said, "I am determined to fundamentally reinforce Japan's defence capabilities within the next five years and secure the substantial increase of Japan's defence budget needed to effect it."

And the push to increase military might has also been seen as the Japanese preparing for conflict with its regional neighbour China.



On other pages...

Sterilisation - snatching the right to choose >> **Pages 14&15**

NORWAY

Labour government moves to crush oil strike

A LABOUR government in Norway has used the war in Ukraine "as an excuse to forbid strikes" by oil and gas workers.

The minister of labour Mjøs Persen stopped the Ledere union's walkout on Friday using a draconian law.

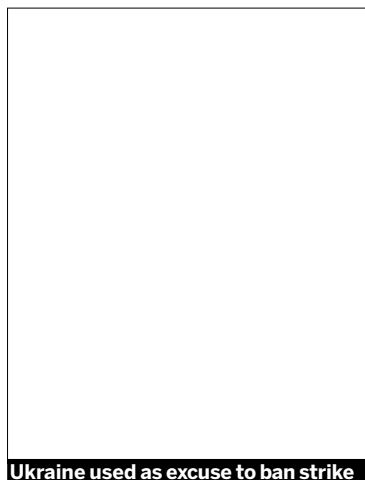
The action by the supervisors and technicians would have slashed gas supplies.

Persen claimed she had "no choice but to intervene" when it has such "great social consequences for the whole of Europe."

Linda, a Norwegian trade unionist and leader of the Red Party in Nordland county, says it shows how "the state protects its interests and not working class interests".

"The strike would have cost Norway around 1.8 billion kroner a day," she told Socialist Worker. "We see a more aggressive employers' side, and they use the government to push back workers' interests and rights."

"I'm a nurse, and every time



Ukraine used as excuse to ban strike

my union tries to go strike the government tries to stop it."

Linda added that the links between Labour and unions are "increasingly a larger problem".

But there are signs of hope in Norway. The SAS pilots' strike, which began on Monday, is shaping up into a titanic battle with the bosses.

PALESTINE

US whitewash murder

THE FAMILY of murdered Palestinian journalist Shireen Abu Akleh has accused the US of whitewash for deciding an Israeli soldier did not mean to kill her.

A US report agreed the bullet that killed Shireen, in the occupied Palestinian city Jenin in May, "likely" came from the Israeli army. But it also said the killing was probably unintentional.

Israeli soldiers killed Shireen as she covered their raid on a Palestinian refugee camp for the Al Jazeera news network. The bullet struck her below her helmet, but above her flak jacket.

The killing embarrassed the US—which relies on Israel to defend its interests—as Shireen was a US citizen.

It had to acknowledge Israel killed Shireen, and then immediately draw a line under it by labelling the murder an accident. A statement from Shireen's family said the US "served to whitewash Shireen's killing."

Celebrate past and fight for future

YOU COULD be forgiven for thinking that the annual Durham Miners' Gala is a small event that was relevant some decades ago, but has now had its day.

The Gala has run since 1871, only being stopped 16 times largely because of industrial action and the world wars.

At its height the gala pulled 300,000 people.

Today it doesn't quite pull that many people.

But this year's Gala attracted some 200,000 people.

It's one of the largest workers' festivals in Europe. This makes the Gala as important now as ever.

It shows the strength of the left and how trade unions can push back against the Tories.

This year RMT union leader Mick Lynch, Unite union leader Sharon Graham and Unison union leader Christine McAnea addressed the crowd.

Two key workers picked by the Durham Miners Association also spoke.

The Gala tradition lies at the heart of British trade unionism, especially for those whose families are connected to mining.

For this reason it's important for the left to show an alternative to the rotten capitalist system.

Capitalist society has thrown up multiple crises and the Gala is a place to discuss and organise as well as celebrate struggles of the past.

Nathan Johnston
Newcastle



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

Arresting smugglers won't save lives—open borders will

EUROPEAN POLICE forces and racist politicians are crowing over the arrest of 40 alleged "people smugglers" after raids in five countries.

The British police say proudly that they have smashed a major operation. Tory home secretary, Priti Patel said, "We'll stop at nothing to end your trade, bring you to justice and save lives."

But this is a racist fantasy. Arresting people who provide dinghies for refugees to cross the Channel does nothing to solve the problem. In fact, the arrests will only increase the cost of getting across, boosting the profits of the remaining smugglers.

The business model for people smugglers relies on the hostile environment which targets

refugees and enforces harsh and deadly border controls.

Already journeys across the Channel are getting more dangerous as refugees move along the French and Belgian coasts, away from the easiest and shortest routes. There are no Ukrainian refugees resorting to dinghies to cross the Channel because they have safe routes to enter the country, usually free on railways and ferries.

If the government was serious about wiping out the people smugglers they would allow safe passage for all refugees—but their agenda is not about safety and saving lives.

The number of refugees crossing the Channel is tiny compared to refugees from Ukraine and Hong

Kong—it is not about the numbers either. Patel and the Tories are only interested in playing the race card to scapegoat refugees.

Socialists, anti-racists and climate activists must continue to provide aid for the thousands of refugees stranded in northern France. They must also continue to push for safe passages for all refugees.

And in Hastings, south England, we will continue to welcome them when they arrive in dinghies or are rescued by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution vessels.

Refugees are welcome here—the sooner Patel and her racist cronies follow Boris Johnson's lead and leave office, the better.

Simon Hester
Hastings

Trickle down funding fails women's football

THE FIRST match of the Women's Euros between England and Austria, sold 74,000 tickets last week.

This is a step forward for the women's game, but large-scale inequality is still prevalent.

From the grassroots to the top division, women's football is underfunded and undervalued.

Young girls are turned away from the sport which is branded as a man's game.

France won £29 million for winning the 2018 Fifa

World Cup, The United States women's team won just £3 million for winning in 2019.

Many of the Euros games will take place in small stadiums with a capacity of less than 12,000.

Many games have sold out but the enthusiasm isn't matched by the fat cats.

A change is needed for women's football, but "trickle down" approaches don't benefit the grassroots.

Heidi Henders
East London

National Insurance changes are too little

NATIONAL Insurance thresholds have changed, meaning some people will save some money during the cost of living crisis.

As many people are forced into food banks, debt and extreme poverty economic reforms like this are desperately needed.

The issue is that this miniscule change does not go far enough. With the Retail Price Index measure of inflation at 11.7 percent, many are still much worse off than what they were this time last year.

Also millions of struggling people will miss



Foodbank in London

out on this extra cash. The lowest earners—mostly those on part time wages, in internships or apprenticeships—won't benefit as they earn less than £9,500.

Those who are unemployed and anyone

earning above £31,000 also won't benefit.

With Boris Johnson packing his suitcases we should demand economic measures that benefit every person. This "boost" is insulting—especially as energy bills are set to further rise in October and National Insurance contributions rose in April.

We need a general election, not another dangerous Tory. Whoever is elected should do it on an agenda of fixing the cost of living crisis.

Sara Ford
North Wales

Just a thought...

Tory agenda feeds fascism

NAZI NATIONAL Action founder Alex Davies has told the court that convicted him that he aimed for an all-white Britain. He wanted black people deported "along the lines of the Conservative government's Rwanda policy".

This chilling comment underscores how the Tories' ramping up official racism feeds straight into helping Britain's fascists.

Mike Killian
On Facebook

Unions instead of Labour?

JOIN AND build a union that will fight for working people. The Tory Labour Party under Keir Starmer hates the trade union movement and the working class. We need something new.

George Baker
On Facebook

Why has Nato grown?

ISN'T UKRAINE fighting Russian imperialism? Nato has only expanded because of fear of Russian aggression, the latest recruits being Sweden and Finland.

Does Socialist Worker expect Ukrainians to jack it in, allow the Russians to take over and then join a mass uprising of workers from within the Russian empire? Might have to wait half a century for that.

John Benest
On Facebook

THE WEST expanding Nato and its wars will produce many more refugees. We must kill the source of the problem. Nato's growth will fuel Russia's aggression. Nato is the strong arm of the capitalist empire.

Steph
On Twitter

General election now

CAN ANYONE seriously expect any of the current and former government ministers to be capable of forming a government with honesty, principles and integrity?

We must demand a general election at the earliest possible time.

Martin Collin Smith
On Twitter

Sukhdev Reel lost her son Ricky in what campaigners suspect was a racist attack. When she criticised the police for failing to properly investigate, they decided to spy on her. She tells Isabel Ringrose her story

‘IF YOU STAND UP YOU BECOME THE ENEMY’

SILENCE IS not an option because we're not accepting it. We need answers—they need to tell me how my son died.” This is how Sukhdev Reel summarised to Socialist Worker her 25-year-long justice campaign for her son.

Ricky Reel died in October 1997, but how and why is still unknown today. And rather than be allowed to grieve and piece their lives back together, the state has attempted to both criminalised and disregard his family.

Sukhdev has pressed the police for answers since Ricky went missing on 15 October 1997. Not only did the Metropolitan Police fail to carry out a proper investigation, but it also ran a spying operation on the Reel family's campaign.

Twenty year-old student Ricky was out with friends in Kingston upon Thames, west London, when a gang of racists physically and verbally attacked them. The group split up, and Ricky was not seen again. During the 1990s a wave of racist attacks and murders had taken place across London and beyond (see right).

The impact of Ricky's death and the horrific trauma his parents, siblings, and family still endure has ripped their world apart. “I'm not the same person I was,” Sukhdev explained. “I died on 21 October when we were given the news that Ricky's body had been found—my kids lost a mother and a brother on the same day.”

Sukhdev decided to write a book about Ricky after her grandchildren asked about their uncle for a school project on a famous person.

From the first call Sukhdev made reporting her son was missing, the police didn't want to know. “They had no intention to carry out an investigation. We were told that because Asians have arranged marriages, or maybe he was



Ricky Reel

gay and that he probably ran away.” Sukhdev was pushed between different branches, fobbed off about the river being checked and forced to conduct her own search. “They left it to family and friends for the first seven days, and it's still left like that,” she said.

“I spent 16 or 17 hours a day looking for my son in Kingston. I was only doing this because the police refused to look for my son.”

Volunteers helped look through the



Police failed to collect evidence and peddled a line that Ricky's death was an accident

streets, bushes and bins to find any traces of Ricky. And important CCTV footage of Ricky's last movements was found because of the family's efforts.

“I'm just a Mum,” Sukhdev said. “I had no experience. I was forced out on the streets when I should have been sitting at home. I was ill and grief-struck. “My kids were crying, and I'd leave them at home on their own because I had no choice. I should have been comforting them, but I was out on the streets not eating or drinking. I was falling down constantly.”

Despite Sukhdev's requests, the police failed to obtain important footage before it was deleted. They also missed critical evidence by not interviewing key witnesses. The line the cops peddled was that his death was an accident.

Sukhdev says this is because the police didn't care. “Ricky was Asian. His skin didn't match whatever they were looking for. In other cases, they would move heaven and earth during an investigation. Why not mine?”

“I stood up and asked questions. It wasn't not normal for an Asian woman to confront the police.”

Sukhdev initially didn't know that Ricky and his friends had been attacked. After it was uncovered, she knew this was key to his disappearance but was utterly dismissed by the cops.

“During the investigation, they never connected the racial attack to Ricky's disappearance. My brother and husband went to Kingston with two of Ricky's friends and told the police they were attacked. The police didn't want to take a statement. It suited them not to pay much attention to the racial attack.”

The family liaison officer bluntly told Sukhdev's two young



Pictures clockwise from above
● **Sukhdev Reel speaking at the launch of her new book at the Marxism Festival earlier this month**

PICTURE: JO ELLIS HOLLAND
● **Protesting on the first anniversary of Ricky's death in 1998.**
● **Hundreds listened intently as Sukhdev told her story at Marxism**

PICTURE: JO ELLIS HOLLAND
● **How Socialist Worker reported the inquest verdict in 1999**



children about Ricky's death without her being present, showing a complete lack of concern for the family.

“This caused more pain and grief to my family, it nearly destroyed my children, and I never received an apology,” she said. In December 1997 Sukhdev and her family launched a complaint over the handling of Ricky's disappearance through the Police Complaints Authority. Surrey police's investigation of that complaint unveiled a catalogue of failures.

But only Sukhdev was allowed to see their report if she promised not to discuss what it uncovered—even with her family. To this day she has kept silent on its contents.

The Met busied themselves, creating an inaccurate profile of Ricky to support their theory that he fell in the Thames while urinating. They challenged and ignored facts such as Ricky having a phobia of open water. Those on river boats near where his body was found heard nothing, and forensic evidence on Ricky's body showed he fell backwards.

During the inquest, which Sukhdev described in the book as a “living nightmare”, the family were interrogated about Ricky and the justice campaign—as if they were the ones on trial.

Sukhdev writes that the 1999 inquest “was not a hearing to establish how Ricky died but rather for the police to attempt to discredit any credible evidence concerning Ricky's death that did not neatly fit into their own theory.”

She described the “patronising” way DCI Morgan, who led the limited investigation into Ricky's death, outlined his theory.

A retired Morgan later attempted to release graphic pictures from a post-mortem on Ricky that was carried out without the family's knowledge and



other evidence he had kept on the case.

“I had one foot on the ledge when I heard this—I was ready to kill myself,” Sukhdev said. “Why do that? To punish me because I haven't stopped talking and for bringing his failures into the open?”

“If you stand up and question them, you become the enemy.”

Sukhdev's brother Mon was refused access to the inquest except to give evidence. He was also accused of interfering with the police investigation, despite playing a vital role looking for evidence. And because of the Undercover Policing Inquiry, which is investigating spy cops infiltration of campaigning groups between 1968 and 2008, Sukhdev learnt in 2014 that her family had been targeted.

“What did I do wrong?” she asked. “I didn't breach anything. I never committed any crime. I was on their radar

because I stood up and faced the authorities and asked questions that needed to be asked.

“It makes me angry. The police said just 48 hours after Ricky went missing they stopped the investigation—which they never really carried out anyway—because they hadn't got resources.

“For them it was more important to watch my movements, who I was speaking to and what I was doing, rather than finding out how my son died. People of colour don't deserve justice in their eyes. We're just a burden on society to them” she added.

The inquest decided on an “open verdict” rather than the accidental death the police had hoped for. But Sukhdev says that the justice system, from the police to coroner's inquests, is part of the same system. “There's nothing independent about them, so you'll never find the truth.

We didn't get any help from them. Now it's even worse. You watch the news and see that the police are the perpetrators of crime. I can't see them changing,” she added.

“After the Stephen Lawrence inquiry they said lessons had been learnt—but the exact same mistakes were found in Ricky's case.”

But Sukhdev has pushed on to fulfil the promise she made to Ricky. The Justice for Ricky Reel campaign wrote letters, held memorials, marches and meetings to spread the word. Sukhdev had to fund the entire campaign through donations or “scraping by” on the family's wages.

“I couldn't balance staying at home and doing the campaign,” Sukhdev explained. “The saddest part is that my children grew up without me. It wears you down—it's a tactic they use so you give up.”

Yet Sukhdev has worked tirelessly with other justice campaigns, marching with and speaking on their platforms and standing with others in similar situations.

Sukhdev says justice would be “someone coming forward and telling me why they killed Ricky. That's all I need. People say time heals wounds, but it doesn't.”

Since the day Ricky didn't come home, Sukhdev has refused to back down. “They didn't expect that we would continue to stand up. We will keep on campaigning.”

The family wants a fresh investigation into Ricky's death to look for new evidence and to re-analyse what already exists. And it wants supporters to write to MPs and share Ricky's story.

“If you hear or see anything now or remember from the past, please come forward. Tell us what happened and end my agony. Justice has no colour. It should be a right for everyone—I shouldn't have to be demanding it.”



Ricky Reel—Silence Is Not An Option is available from **Bookmarks at bookmarks bookshop.co.uk** Contact sukhdevreel@hotmail.com for information and messages of support Sign the petition for a new police investigation bit.ly/RickyReel

RACISM

Far right drove wave of attacks in 90s London

LONDON IN the 1990s was a key battleground in the fight against racism and the far right.

The Nazi British National Party (BNP) with its “Rights for Whites” campaign was on the rise in the east and south of the city.

Its first local councillor, Derek Beackon, won a seat in Tower Hamlets in 1993. He declared, “Asians are rubbish, and that is what we are going to clear from the streets.”

The presence of the far right was already feeding into racist violence.

And the police made ignoring evidence of a racial motivation in attacks a crucial part of their approach.

Roland Adams was just 15 years old in 1991 when 12 thugs set upon him in Greenwich. They stabbed him to death while shouting, “Nigger.”

Rohit Duggal was murdered by a gang in Eltham in 1992. The police refused to record his killing as racially motivated.

A year later, a racist gang in the same area murdered Stephen Lawrence.

Campaign

Again, the police sought to deny racism was a factor, instead suggesting the attack resulted from inter-gang warfare.

John Reid was a white man married to a black woman. He was beaten to death and set on fire in 1996 after a long-running racist campaign.

Anti-racists mounted a massive campaign to drive back the racists, targeting the BNP in particular.

Groups of activists, mainly grouped around the Anti Nazi League, went door to door in areas hit by racist attacks. They took on arguments and helped mobilise the anti-racist majority.

Some 60,000 people marched in 1993 to close down the BNP's south London headquarters and fought pitched battles with police that protected it.

Campaigning meant that every attack met with a mass response, helping to isolate the racists and leading the BNP to lose its sole councillor.



WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties.

We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women.

We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We oppose discrimination against disabled people including those who experience mental distress.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests.

We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5602

Socialist Workers Party meetings



DEFENDING A woman's right to choose outside the US embassy

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

After Roe v Wade ... How do we defend abortion rights?

BRIGHTON & HOVE
Thu 21 July, 6.30pm
818-391-0420

BRISTOL
Thu 21 July, 7pm
688-397-3148

CAMBRIDGE
Thu 21 July, 7.30pm
681-800-4408

CHESTERFIELD
Thu 21 July, 7pm
Assembly Rooms, 13/14
Chesterfield Rd, S40 1AR
828 532 8731

LONDON: WEST & NORTH WEST
Wed 20 July, 7.30pm
812-4911-6190

MANCHESTER
Wed 20 July, 7pm
Friends' Meeting House,
6 Mount St, M2 5NS

ABERDEEN
Revolution is the choice of the people—crisis and revolt in the Middle East and north Africa
Wed 20 July, 7pm
894-2628-7708

BIRMINGHAM
Jane McAlevey's organising model—is it a rank and file strategy?
Wed 20 July, 7pm
Friends of the Earth, The Warehouse,
54-57 Allison St, B5 5TH
281-634-5938

BLACK COUNTRY, SHROPSHIRE & STAFFORD
Dear England? Progressive patriotism and nationalism in sport
Wed 20 July, 7.30pm
914-9548-1031

BOURNEMOUTH
After Johnson resigns—how do we get rid of the Tories' rotten system?
Thu 21 July, 7.30pm
Friends Meeting House,
16 Wharnclyffe Rd, BH5 1AH
843-0549-8738

BRADFORD
Why the right are attacking net zero and can we get a sustainable economy?
Thu 21 July, 7pm
Bread + Roses,
14 N Parade, BD1 3HT
885-9187-7552

CARDIFF
Railways and refuse workers—can strikes win?
Wed 20 July, 7.30pm
Mackintosh Residents Community Centre,
Keppoch St, CF24 3JW
630-181-4857

DEVON & CORNWALL
Trotsky and the united front
Thu 21 July, 7.30pm
865-2972-2883

GLASGOW
Police brutality—why we say abolish the police
Thu 21 July, 7pm
Avant Garde,
34-44 King St, G1 5QT
879-2402-3259

HARLOW
Is Britain becoming a police state?
Thu 21 July, 7.30pm
832-8746-7480

HOME COUNTIES
After Johnson resigns—how do we get rid of the Tories' rotten system?
Thu 21 July, 6.30pm
8341 170 103

HUDDERSFIELD
All you need to know about Marx
Wed 20 July, 6.30pm
290-168-1804

KENT
Patterns of revolution—what can we learn from Sudan?
Thu 21 July, 7.30pm
434-623-8064

LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE
Railways and refuse workers—can strikes win?
Thu 21 July, 7pm
Friends Meeting House,
23 Meeting House Ln, LA1 1TX
992-204-9372

LEEDS
From Vietnam—how people power ended wars
Thu 21 July, 7pm
Hyde Park Book Club,
27-29 Headingley Ln, LS6 1BL
881-4770-0676

LIVERPOOL
After Johnson resigns—how do we get rid of the Tories' rotten system?
Wed 20 July, 7pm
Friends Meeting House,
22 School Ln,
L1 3BT

LONDON: HACKNEY
Climate change, war and the future of energy
Thu 21 July, 7.30pm
Halkevi Community Centre,
31-33, Dalston Lane,
E8 3DF
854-8245-8715

LONDON: ISLINGTON
Fake news and alternative facts—who controls the media?
Thu 21 July, 7pm
874-012-7970

LONDON: NEWHAM
Marxism and moral panic—resisting the war on trans people
Wed 20 July, 7pm
Stratford Advice Arcade,
107-109 The Grove,
E15 1HP
288-098-8827

LONDON: SOUTH EAST
Why Marx matters
Thu 21 July, 7pm
Deptford Lounge, Deptford
Lounge, 9 Giffin St, SE8 4RJ
529-913-6390

LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST
Why is the right attacking net zero and how do we win a sustainable economy?
Wed 20 July, 7.30pm
William Morris Community
Centre, 6-8 Greenleaf Rd,
E17 6QQ
543-023-057

NEWCASTLE
System change not climate change
Thu 21 July, 7pm
Tyneside Irish Centre,
43 Gallowgate,
NE1 4SG
368-595-2712

NORTH EAST SCOTLAND
Revolution is the choice of the people—crisis and revolt in the Middle East and north Africa
Wed 20 July, 7pm
894-2628-7708

NORWICH
Marx and revolution in the 21st century
Wed 20 July, 7.30pm
Butterfly Café,
114A King St,
NR1 1QE
906-652-5299

OXFORD & THAMES VALLEY
1974—when workers brought down the Tories
Wed 20 July, 7pm
861-2001-6477

PORTSMOUTH
Marxism in 30 minutes
Wed 20 July, 7.30pm
Somerset Community Centre,
Winston Churchill Ave,
PO5 4JJ
488-934-2809

SHEFFIELD AND SOUTH YORKSHIRE
From war to climate change—tear down the borders, let migrants in
Thu 21 July, 7pm
Central United Reform Church,
60 Norfolk St,
S1 2JB
528-174-9278

WIGAN
Are we moving into an age of Catastrophe?
Thu 21 July, 7pm
The Old Courts,
Gerrard Winstanley House,
Crawford St,
WN1 1NA
844-6939-7141

YORK & SCARBOROUGH
The radical roots of Pride
Wed 20 July, 7.30pm
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Selected writings on socialism and liberation
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The life, music and politics of the rebel Bob Marley

Get Up, Stand Up! The Bob Marley Musical, in its first year at London's Lyric Theatre, is a vibrant picture of the life behind the music, says **Jeandre Coetser**

A YOUNG Bob Marley stands alongside his older self, looking back through a quick progression through his life.

We watch his mother send him off to live with his father's family in Kingston, his subsequent abandonment to violence and poverty—and his interest in music.

It's a transition from young "rude boy" to a determined almost ethereal soul rebel—a journey that accompanied an amazing discography. We encounter the iconic moment where Marley and the Wailers, cold and somewhat lost in Britain, stroll into Chris Blackwell's office.

They demand money from the music producer and instead leave with a record deal.

Marley is presented here as a heart-breaker, with the story of his political beliefs and activity acting as a sort of subplot to that of his relationships and music.

The dialogue includes references to his Rastafarian beliefs and his



Michael Duke as Bob Marley

criticism of colonialism and working for the "white man's system". But it never delves deeper.

At one point it is implied that taking a political stance with his music was a marketing ploy to try and win a cautious white rock audience.

But the soundtrack and set design offered redemption. Projected images illustrate different moments in history, including Jamaican independence, the US Civil Rights Movement, protests and riots. I even spotted a Socialist Worker placard.

The set itself is one of radio booth boxes and stacked sound systems, while the cast are decked out in 70s style flare. The music interweaves throughout like a giant concert, with a nod to soul music.

There are many times when the audience can just stand up and groove—definitely a performance highlight.

Together, it all paints a vibrant picture of the politics and environment that shaped the radical Bob Marley.

Get Up, Stand Up! The Bob Marley Musical is on show now at the Lyric Theatre, central London



ARTHUR ASHE in Soweto, South Africa, after demanding seating was unsegregated

A tennis star who stood for much more

DOCUMENTARY

CITIZEN ASHE

Available now on BBC iPlayer

CITIZEN ASHE is the story of tennis legend and social activist Arthur Ashe. He might be known to most for his

stellar sports career—winning Wimbledon, both the US and Australian Open, and the first black player to be selected for the US Davis Cup Team.

But this film uncovers Ashe's personal evolution.

Born and raised in the segregated south, Ashe

infiltrated the "lilywhite" institute of top-tier tennis" just as the Civil Rights Movement was gaining momentum.

As his activism grew, he embraced not only the civil rights in the US, but demanded rights for all oppressed people throughout the world.

Resistance in a dystopian Brazil of the near-future

FILM

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Available on digital platforms from Monday 18 July

THEY ARE now strangers in their own home.

Under a new executive order from the government, thousands of residents of African descent find themselves marked as exiled refugees. Plucked from

their homes by armed police and ruthlessly deported, the new regime in Brazil is creating a worldwide crisis.

Those who remain can choose to hide or fight.

Lives are on the line in this dystopian near future and violence is escalating for those who defy the new law.

Protests, and an underground resistance movement inspires the nation.



Deported by armed police

RADIO

TOM MAYHEW IS BENEFIT SCUM

BBC Radio 4, 11pm, Weds 13 Jul and then on BBC Sounds

IN THE first of the new series, Tom Mayhew takes issue with the term "staycation" as he's never been abroad in his life.

Mayhew's stand-up explores how the working class holiday has always been closer to home.

Tom Mayhew Is Benefit Scum is an autobiographical stand-up series.

The comedian shares stories about his life growing up working class and his time on benefits.

The show takes a wry, sideways look at the prejudices that some people have towards benefits claimants and turns those assumptions on their head.

RADIO

TECHNO: A SOCIAL HISTORY

BBC Radio 4, 11.30am, Tue 19 Jul and then on BBC Sounds

WHAT MAKES techno the perfect music to accompany radical ideas?

DJ and producer Ash Lauryn traces the origins of techno music to its birth in a suburb of post-industrial Detroit in the early 1980s.

She explores its impact across the world from techno parades in Berlin to hotbeds of progressive resistance in Eastern Europe and the Middle East.

Lauryn is a native of Detroit.

She hears stories from techno's architects, elevators, and disciples—including Juan Atkins, Kevin Saunderson, Ellen Allien, Richie Hawtin and many more.

Abandoned

She finds out how the cathedral-like nightclubs of Berlin were born after the Cold War, in some of the city's abandoned infrastructure.

In the capital of Georgia, Giorgi Kikonishvili talks about the Bassiani.

The club became a headquarters for LGBT+ politics and community organising.

But then armed police raids threatened the scene's very existence.

Over the series, Lauryn explores techno's ongoing association with counterculture.

She asks why, to many, it offers the perfect soundtrack to defiance and a radical spirit.

DEMANDING the right to choose has always been about more than access to abortion. It also has to include the right to be a parent.

The brutal history of forced sterilisations sits at the sharpest point of racism, sexism and class violence. In the US, this horrific act crossed state lines and was passed down through generations.

Thousands of people, disproportionately black, were forcibly sterilised in the US throughout the 20th century. Exact figures are hard to come by, but it is at least 60,000.

Some were told the operation was temporary. Others were coerced into signing consent forms they couldn't read, or only gave the go-ahead while in the throes of labour pains.

Many were told their welfare payments would stop unless they agreed to the procedure. Some women weren't even informed that tubal ligation had occurred, as doctors performed the procedure during other operations.

At one point, so common was the procedure across the US South, it was colloquially known as a "Mississippi appendectomy".

But this wasn't a result of dodgy doctors. Forced sterilisations were organised, funded and driven from the top of government into the medical establishment.

At the turn of the 20th century birth rates were dropping as industrial capitalism became more established and people moved from rural to urban areas.

As a result, people had less children. Alongside this was the deeply racist view that black people, seen as animalistic, may overtake the white population.

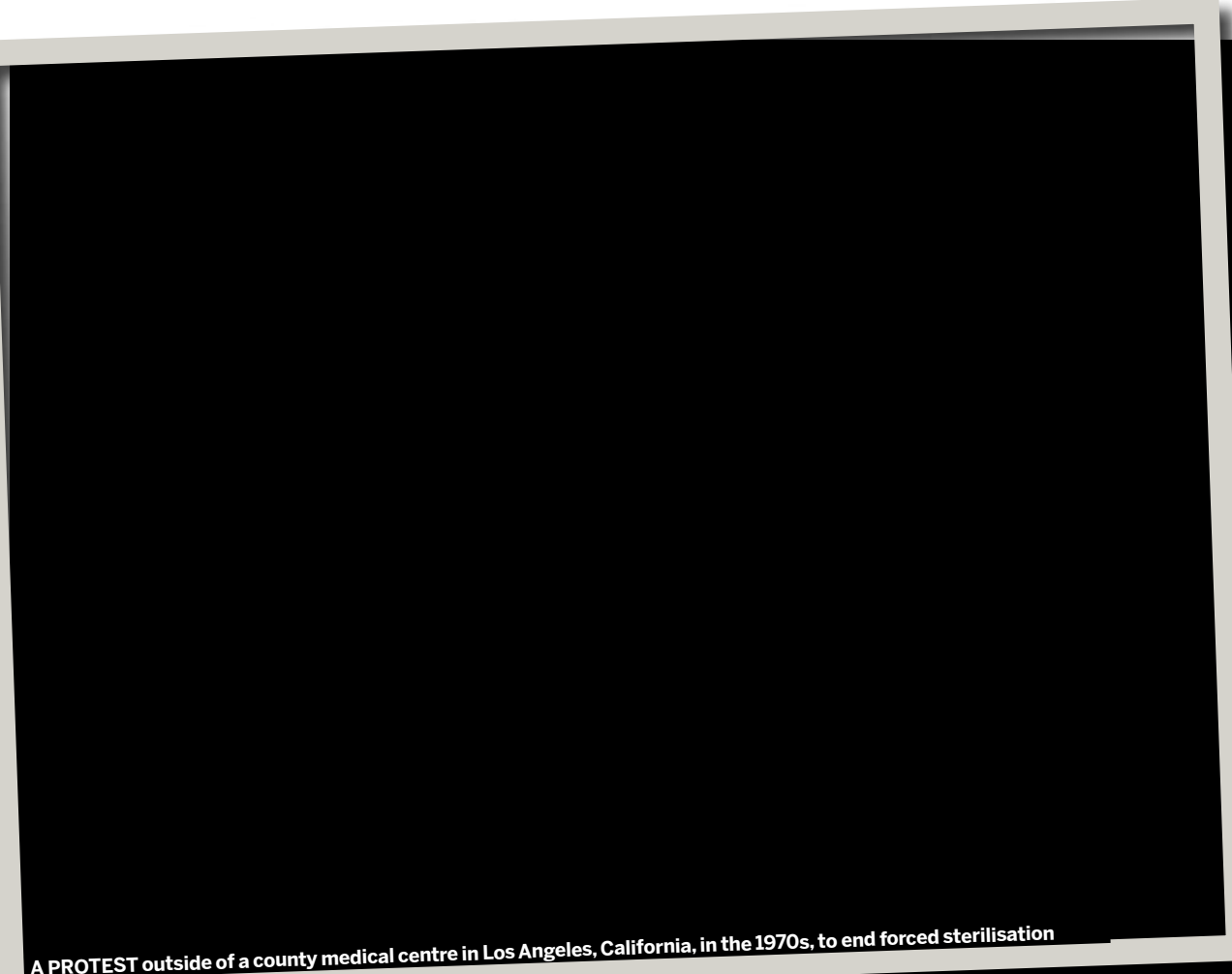
I**N 1905 president Theodore Roosevelt ended his Lincoln Day speech by declaring that "race purity must be maintained." This drove the "science" of eugenics that was used to justify the programme of forced sterilisation.**

Eugenics is the idea that a population can be genetically purified by removing certain "inferior" groups from the gene pool. In 1907, the first eugenics legislation was passed in Indiana.

Over the next twenty years, some 31 other states followed suit. These states maintained a federally funded eugenics board.

Doctors could sterilise people virtually at will. Sometimes their families would object, but it rarely made a difference.

Their targets were clear—immigrants, black people, Indigenous Americans, poor



STERILISATION— SNATCHING THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE

Forced sterilisation stopped women having children. Sarah Bates investigates how thousands of women, disproportionately black, were mutilated by the US state

white people and people with disabilities.

It was an inspiration to some. The 1933 ruling "Law for the Prevention of Offspring with Hereditary Diseases" in Nazi Germany was modelled on similar legislation in Indiana and California. Using this law, the Nazis sterilised around 400,000 children and adults.

Back in the US, laws were designed to target people deemed "mentally defective," "feeble-minded" or just plain "undesirable".

One such person was Carrie Buck. Carrie was imprisoned in 1924 in the Virginia State Colony for Epileptics and

“ Forced sterilisations were organised, funded and driven from the top

Feeble-Minded. Her crime? Bearing a child as a result of being raped by her foster parents' nephew.

Just 20 years old, Carrie was picked out to test the law on implementing Virginia's eugenacist policy. Supreme Court Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes said in black and white why the state didn't want her to have children.

He said, "It is better for all the world if instead of waiting to execute degenerate offspring for crime, or to let them starve for their imbecility, society can prevent those who are manifestly unfit from continuing their kind. Three generations

of imbeciles are enough." Following the Second World War there was a change in the way sterilisation was used—it became a specific tool of racism. The shift was damning for black women.

In North Carolina, for instance, it's estimated that black women were sterilised at three times the rate of white women between 1950 to 1966. It was more than 12 times the rate of white men.

Why? Because racists in the state and medical establishments thought black people couldn't be good parents, and wanted to stop poor children being born.

It was treated as a public health intervention to keep welfare payments low and the general population "healthy". Puerto Rico is one harrowing example.

Between the 1930s and 70s around a third of women there were sterilised by the US government, and abortion was illegal. Activists demanded, "End all genocide. Abortion under community control".

I**N THE 1970s somewhere between 25 and 42 percent of Indigenous American women were forcibly sterilised by the US government. But a number of legal cases, driven by a sense of injustice from below, highlighted the abhorrent practice affecting women and children.**

The landmark case was of Minnie Lee and Mary Alice Relf from North Carolina in 1973. Revolutionary writer Angela Davis explained forced sterilisation simply as "a racist form of mass 'birth control'."

She said the Relf case meant "the Pandora's box of sterilization abuse was finally flung open".

"The urgent need for mass opposition to sterilization abuse became tragically clear. The facts surrounding the Relf sisters' story were horrifyingly simple."

The sisters were sterilised at just 14 and 12 years old. Their mother, who was illiterate, signed the consent forms she couldn't read with an X.

She thought she was signing a form for birth control injections that the girls had previously received.

These Depo-Provera shots had been administered to the girls under the assumption that they were sexually active.

Their social worker Jessie Bly found the two sisters post operation, terrified and alone, huddled together in cotton surgical gowns.

"I just hurt so bad," said Mary Alice. "I just hurt so bad, Miss Bly."

A third Relf sister, Katie, narrowly avoided sterilisation by locking herself in her bedroom when the nurses came to her house to collect her.

Madrigal v Quilligan is another example. Here, ten

women of Mexican origin took the County Hospital to court for tricking them into tubal ligations.

D**R James Quilligan was open about the reasons. One key witness testified that he had said that "poor minority women in LA County were having too many babies, that it was a strain on society, and that it was good to be sterilised".**

The judge ruled in the hospital's favour, claiming the women were at fault.

He assumed their breakdowns after sterilisation were caused by their inability to raise a big family, which was important in Latina culture.

He said it was their cultural background that heightened their trauma—not the procedure itself. Although they didn't win, the case led to more stringent guidelines around informed consent.

But despite the best efforts of activists, the practice isn't in the dim and distant past. Forced sterilisation is as much a part of the modern-day US as McDonalds and mass shootings.

An investigation in 2013 found that at least 148 women inmates in two California prisons were sterilised in just four years.

Many of the women say they were coerced into it.

Unsurprisingly, the majority were black and Latina. In Valley State Prison in California, bosses spent over £123,000 of public money to perform tubal ligations on women.

Its gynaecologist Dr James Heinrich defended it. "Over a 10-year period, that isn't a huge amount of money," he said.

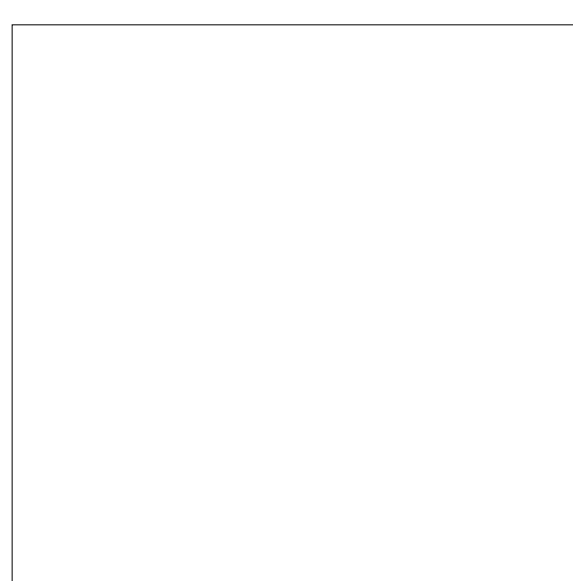
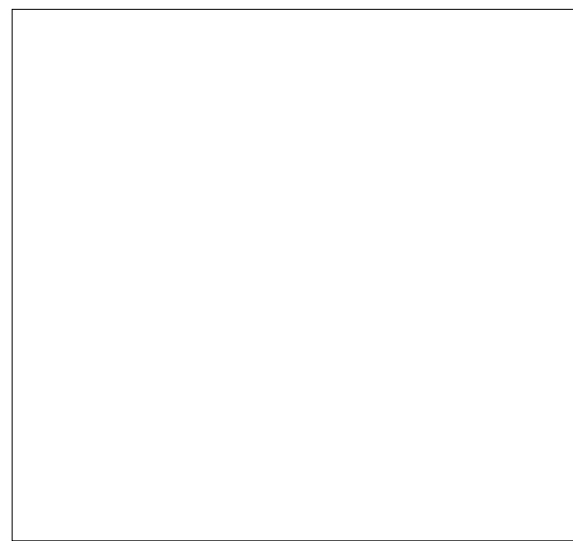
"Compared to what you save in welfare paying for these unwanted children—as they procreate more."

I**N 2017, Judge Sam Benningfield was found to be offering 30-day sentence reductions for prisoners who agreed to vasectomies or birth control implants.**

And two years ago, a whistleblower alleged that imprisoned migrant women were given hysterectomies without their knowledge.

Nurse Dawn Wooten said the facilities' gynaecologist was known as the "uterus collector" among staff.

"Everybody he sees, he's taking all their uteruses out or



Minnie Lee Relf (top, left) and Mary Alice Relf in 1973. Prisons like Valley State Prison in California still practiced forced sterilisation in recent years (above)

he's taken their tubes out. What in the world," she said.

It's hard to imagine what sort of impact such a vile injustice has on a person. Certainly for the Relf sisters it is something that has stayed with them in the intervening five decades.

"It might have happened a long time ago, but it still brings back memories. We're still thinking about it," said Minnie Lee. "I know I can't have kids, and it gets to me sometimes."

"Every time I see somebody like my cousin or my niece Debbie with their child, I think about it. Seeing these little pretty babies, I wish that was me."

There are many, many, more people like Minnie Lee and Mary Alice Relf. Too many women to count. Too many lives ripped apart by racist laws and too many bodies ripped open by racist doctors.

The fight for real bodily autonomy—in its every expression—has to be a central plank of the wider battle for reproductive justice.

READ MORE

● **Abortion Wars—the Fight for Reproductive Rights** by Judith Orr £13.99

● **Say It Loud—Marxism and the Fight Against Racism** edited by Brian Richardson £9.99

● **Marxism and Women's Liberation** by Judith Orr £9.99

Available at Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



A general strike that helped India win freedom

In the first of a series of columns on India's freedom struggle, John Newsinger looks at Sholapur, a city that dared to fight

ON 2 March 1930, Mahatma Gandhi launched a new civil disobedience campaign in India, calling for the country's independence.

British violence would be defeated by Indian non-violence, he proclaimed.

The British duly responded with considerable violence, with unarmed demonstrators beaten unconscious by cops.

Gandhi himself was arrested on 5 May, leading to massive protests across India. But many that took to the streets were not prepared to submit to being beaten by the police.

Before Gandhi called off the campaign well over 60,000 people were imprisoned.

The resistance was at most fierce in the working class stronghold of Sholapur, today known as Solapur.

Here, in the centre of southern India, the textile workers had a history of militancy.

Provoked

A general strike was called, the mills were closed, the trains were stopped and thousands took to the streets. The police made a number of arrests that provoked more protests.

This time, the police opened fire, killing officially four protesters but unofficially as many as fifty.

Outraged workers proceeded to drive the police from the streets, killing two of them, and then set about burning down police stations and court buildings.

The police fled from the city, leaving it in the hands of the workers for three days.

The pro-British Times of India newspaper complained that "British Raj is ended, Gandhi Raj is here".

After three days, troops were sent in to crush the rebellion and martial law was declared.

During this period, troops and police ran riot, raping

GANDHI'S MOVEMENT set off a more militant struggle

and looting, as they set about crushing the resistance. Protesters were imprisoned for wearing prohibited "Gandhi caps", and a man got seven years in prison for carrying the flag of Gandhi's Indian National Congress.

The strikers were forced back to work.

Once back in control, the British proceeded to put four men, Mallappa Dhansetti, Qurban Hussain, Shrikrishna Sarda and Jagganath Shinde, on trial for leading the movement.

They were sentenced to death and hanged on 12 January 1931. The men had in effect been judicially lynched by the British.

Their execution was greeted with a one-day general strike in Sholapur and militant protests across the country. Sholapur was proclaimed "The City of Four Martyrs".

What will probably come as a surprise is that a Labour government in London presided over this ferocious repression.

Prime minister Ramsay

“ Labour had to show the ruling class it could be trusted with the British Empire

Macdonald and his secretary of state for India, William Wedgwood Benn, were determined to demonstrate that the British Empire was safe in their hands.

Labour had to show the British ruling class that it could be relied on to defend their interests.

Outraged

In India, this involved crushing Gandhi's campaign, and in Sholapur breaking a general strike and hanging the men who led it.

Most but not all Labour MPs agreed with this.

Archibald Fenner Brockway, MP for Leyton East, was outraged.

He could scarcely believe what the government was doing in India and tried to insist that parliament debate the repression.

That led to his suspension from the Commons.

As he later put it, "I was shocked that a Labour government should besmirch the record of the British working class in this way".

He put the governments use of repression in India and betrayal of the unemployed in Britain down to the corrupting influence of the Commons. He thought often decent Labour MPs fell for "the glamour of the social life of the other side, steadily leaving their own class behind them".

The Commons "tended to blunt a keen sense of the class struggle," he said.

Nothing has changed in that regard.

Police escape blame in Jermaine Baker inquiry

by ISABEL RINGROSE

A 28 year-old unarmed black man was lawfully killed by police in 2015 despite a “catalogue of failings”, a public inquiry has found.

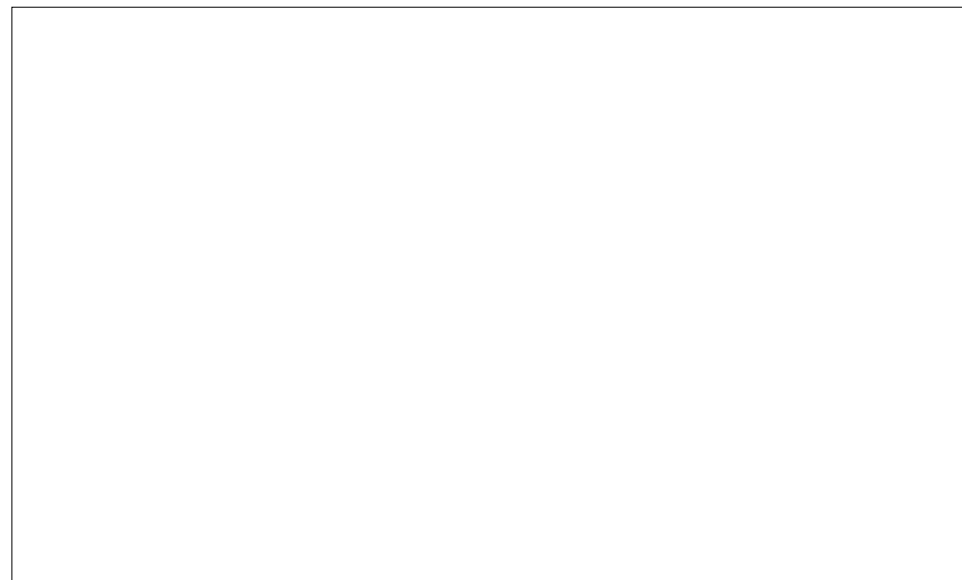
Metropolitan Police shot and killed Jermaine Baker in north London on 11 December 2015 during Operation Ankaa. He was one of three people in a car attempting to free Izzet Eren, who was being transported to Wood Green Crown Court from HMP Wormwood Scrubs.

Jermaine’s mother, Margaret Smith, said, “Jermaine was dead before he got in that car.

His life was taken for no good reason—as I have always said he should have gone to prison like the rest of the men in the car.”

Margaret added that she “cannot agree with the judge’s conclusions that Jermaine did not die as a result of these failures”.

“That is a conclusion that I cannot understand and the judge has not explained why he has drawn that conclusion,” she said. “After seven years of



A PROTEST in 2017 to remember those who have been killed by the police

waiting and two months of evidence we deserved more.”

The inquiry report identified at least 24 failings by the Met from the start of the operation.

But it did not find that the failures contributed to Jermaine’s death.

The officer who shot Jermaine, known as W80, was cleared of unlawful

killing. Operation Ankaa’s commander DCI Williams was also cleared for gross negligence manslaughter.

Jermaine was in the front of an Audi that had an imitation Uzi gun in it.

W80 told the inquiry he acted in self-defence because Jermaine moved his hand upwards to what they thought

was a firearm in his bag across

his chest. Jermaine’s legal team said he was raising his arms to surrender.

W80 claimed he repeatedly told Jermaine to place his hands on the dashboard—something Jermaine’s team said was a lie.

The report criticises those in command for deciding to allow the prison van to take Eren to Wood Green Crown

Court so that cops could intercept those trying to free him.

“Whatever lip service may have been paid to considering other options, there was never, in reality, more than one,” the judge said.

The control room managing the operation was also “not fit for purpose”.

This was mainly because the audio equipment placed in the bugged Audi was not properly installed.

Possession

It should have heard that the occupants were discussing being in possession of an imitation firearm.

Instead, the message relayed to officers was that they definitely were armed with a real firearm.

Keen to let the operation go ahead, senior officers failed to recognise that they had enough evidence to make arrests before firearms officers intervened.

Inquest charity’s head of casework Anita Sharma said, “It’s difficult to comprehend how such catastrophic failings were not assessed by the judge to have contributed to Jermaine’s death.” She

added that the findings are “yet more evidence of the systemic failures of this force,” and evidence of “harmful policing practices nationally.”

“We must see accountability for those involved in Jermaine’s death, to send a message to police leadership and officers that they are not above the law,” Sharma added.

“The failure to hold the police to account breeds impunity which ultimately allows deaths and harms to continue.

“Scrutiny of previous fatal police shootings has revealed serious failings in firearms operational planning, intelligence and communication.

There has been an institutional failure to enact change, which cannot continue.”

In June 2017 the Crown Prosecution Service said it would not prosecute W80.

But in May 2018 the Independent Office for Police Misconduct directed the Met to hold gross misconduct proceedings.

W80 is challenging the IOPC decision to push for gross misconduct, which will be heard in the Supreme Court in October.

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Extreme poverty rises as Sri Lanka's economy falls

Fruit left to rot, blackouts are common and transport has halted—Yuri Prasad looks at who's to blame for the 'debt crisis' that's punishing ordinary people

A MIXTURE of rage and despair fills the air in Sri Lanka. The nets of fishers are empty because they cannot find fuel to take their boats out to sea.

Farmers stare blankly at their crops as they over-ripen because there's no diesel for tractors to bring in the harvest.

In the cities, transport has ground to a halt and petrol queues extend for miles. The government cuts off electricity for several hours every day, meaning often there is no light in the evening.

Meanwhile the price of cooking gas has risen so high that many can't afford it.

Everyone fears that food will also soon become scarce and that starvation will come to Sri Lanka—a largely agricultural country that was until recently hailed as an economic growth over-achiever.

"I have never been more scared about the economy and the food situation, and what it means for our working people," Ahilan Kadirgamar, a union activist and lecturer in Jaffna, told the Sri Lankan Daily Mirror newspaper.

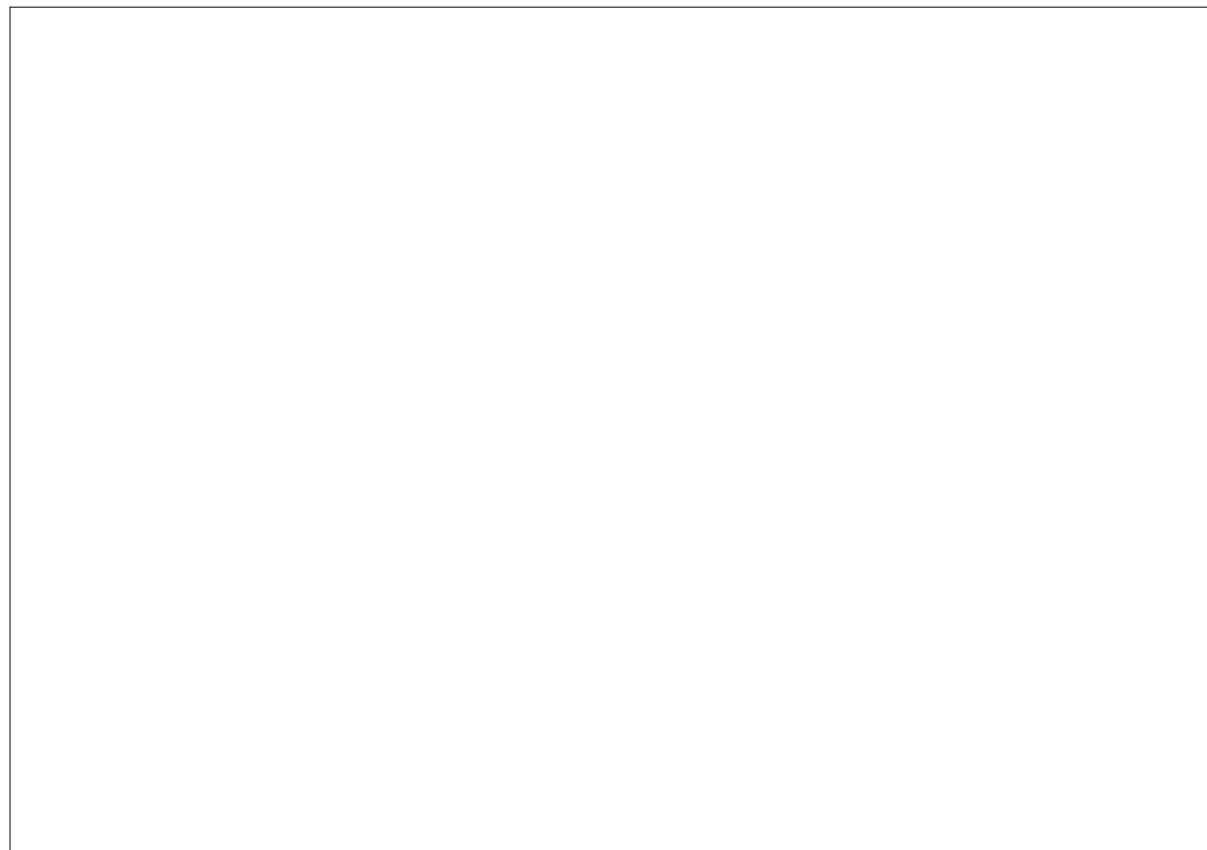
"The state has no plan and has not given any leadership or direction, and its local officials are hiding," they added.

The United Nations says that 70 percent of the population is already skipping at least one meal a day.

The crisis started when Sri Lanka defaulted on its international debts in April, and lenders gave the government 30 days to find £63 million pounds of unpaid interest. That's money it was simply unable to find.

Without foreign currency reserves, Sri Lanka is now barely able to import any goods—even basic medicines.

The economy now stands on the



SRI LANKAN rickshaw drivers push their vehicles to buy fuel

brink of collapse, and so does the establishment.

"The reality is that there is no government now, and there is no leadership in the country," says Ahilan. "The president and prime minister have no legitimacy to lead, and the empty shell of the ruling regime is cracking."

A delegation from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) left the island late last month, having so far failed to secure a refinancing deal with the

government. They know protests could sweep the fragile regime away within weeks, or even days.

Any eventual IMF deal will involve tearing into public spending and passing the buck for the crisis to the working class and the poor.

The Fund says it first wants to "stabilise" Sri Lanka's debts. That's bankers' code for agreeing a new payment plan that will be funded by a fire sale of state assets.

Ministers have already agreed

to give the Ceylon Petroleum Corporation's oil facilities to a range of multinationals and to cut some 800,000 public sector jobs.

The attacks will only add to rage on the streets.

Ahilan says workers now need to "start taking responsibility for not just our political crisis, but also our overwhelming economic woes.

"We have to ground our economic future in our people's power rather than place our faith on the market."

Investors gouge African states

TODAY'S international debt crisis in the Global South is different from the one that savaged Latin America in the 1980s.

Back then the US brokered deals between oil rich countries with budget surpluses and poor countries in Central and South America. This time private investors are at the centre of the turmoil.

Some 57 percent of Ghana's external debt payments go to private lenders rather than global institutions, such as the World Bank and the IMF, according to campaigning group Debt Justice.

The lenders are international investment banks, hedge funds and asset managers looking to maximise their profit. They are particularly attracted to Africa because they can get away with higher interest rates there.

Look at the difference in borrowing rates between Argentina, in Latin America, and Angola, in Africa.

Argentina has defaulted on debts on nine occasions, but the government there can borrow at rates of around 7 percent.

Angola has not defaulted since the end of the civil war in 2002, yet is charged at least 9 percent interest rates, despite its loans being for shorter terms.

No wonder that many African economists accuse the financial system of racism. And no wonder many African states have instead turned to the Chinese state to borrow money.

Central banks trapped Global South in debt—then raised interest rates

WHEN THE West's central bankers decided to try to tackle inflation by raising interest rates, they knew there would be casualties.

In economically advanced countries, it will mean slowing down the economy and rising unemployment.

In indebted nations, rate rises carry the possibility of a Sri Lankan-style debt

default and the danger of economic collapse.

More than half of low-income countries are now at high risk of "debt distress" or are already in it, according to the World Bank.

In the wake of the 2008 financial crash, the big central banks lowered their interest rates. They encouraged countries in the Global South to borrow from them using hard currencies,



Ghanaian farmer surveys crop failure

mainly the US dollar.

By 2019 this pile of "external debt" had risen to \$5.6 trillion, or £4.7 trillion. That figure has risen during the pandemic and the war in Ukraine.

With interest rates rising, and currencies in the Global South devaluing fast, many countries are struggling to pay interest on their loans.

The Ghanaian currency Cedi has dropped 22

percent against the US dollar this year.

Now the West African country is forced to spend 45 percent of its revenue on interest payments.

In response, the government slashed fertiliser subsidies—meaning future crop yields will almost certainly fall.

Fewer crops means more hunger and death for millions of already desperately poor workers and farmers.

IN BRIEF

Strikes brewing at Samlesbury factory

STRIKES WILL go ahead at a brewery in Samlesbury, Lancashire, after bosses offered workers weak beer in negotiations.

Over 200 GMB union members workers rejected a 3 percent pay increase. They make beers including Stella, Budweiser and Becks.

They are set to strike from 7pm on Saturday until 7am next Monday. And they plan a further 12-hour walkout on Tuesday of next week.

Saint James Tavern workers to strike

WORKERS AT the Saint James Tavern in Brighton have announced plans to strike for 20 days this month. Workers are demanding £11.50 an hour, sick pay and recognition for their UVW union.

Cleaners want to sweep away low pay

OUTSOURCED cleaners at Vodafone's headquarters have launched a campaign for higher pay and sick pay, and against victimisation and overwork.

The IWGB union members are outsourced to Mitie.

Court workers ballot for walkouts

OUTSOURCED security workers at HM courts and tribunals service were set to finish a strike ballot over pay as Socialist Worker went to press.

The PCS union members, employed by outsourcer OCS, are fighting for a range of demands including the real living wage and full occupational sick pay.

It comes as other courts and tribunals workers, also in the PCS, were set to begin a strike ballot over workload on Thursday of this week.

Indicative ballot at Kirklees Council

THE KIRKLEES Unison union branch committee has voted to hold an indicative ballot for strikes to fight the victimisation of its secretary.

It means workers at the West Yorkshire council could walk out over bosses' sacking of Paul Holmes.

Last week Holmes was removed from union positions by Unison's national office, following a rule change at June's conference. Holmes's appeal against his workplace dismissal is set for 10 August.

Strike to hit schools in south London

WORKERS WHO take children with special educational needs to schools in south London were set to strike on Thursday and Friday.

The GMB union members, who work for outsourcing giants HATS, are demanding a 20 percent pay rise.

DURHAM MINERS' GALA



NEU UNION members join the 200,000-strong Durham Miners' Gala last Saturday (see report on page 9).

PICTURE: DANIEL KEBEDE

COMMUNICATION WORKERS

Union 'ultimatum' to BT bosses over pay

by NICK CLARK

WORKERS IN BT were on the cusp of finding out whether union leaders will call strikes over pay as Socialist Worker went to press.

Leaders of the CWU union had given BT bosses a deadline of Wednesday of this week to make a "significantly improved" pay offer.

If not, union leaders say they will call strike dates for workers in BT and Openreach.

CWU union activists were also set to gather in central London on Wednesday of this week to discuss the next steps.

Cut

BT bosses forced through a pay increase of £1,500 earlier this year—a real terms pay cut for every worker.

The CWU told its members last week, "We have committed to talks with the company but only if they are willing to



BT Group workers voting yes during the ballot

improve their offer, agree to no further imposition on pay and agree that it would be subject to a CWU consultative ballot of all affected members.

"In short, next week we will either enter into serious negotiations with the company or we will announce strike action."

Union leaders shouldn't hold off action for anything less than an offer in line with the RPI rate of inflation, which is close to 12 percent.

CWU rep Eugene Caparros told Socialist Worker that workers were "thrilled" at the vote to strike and felt "vindicated by that result."

"They're prepared to go on strike—they're aware of what that means for them," he said.

He added that activists on Wednesday were expecting to "either be told a deal has been offered or to get ready for a strike."

"We're making preparations already."

HIGHER EDUCATION

Protest at Roehampton over university jobs cuts

AROUND 150 UCU union members and their supporters rallied outside Roehampton university, west London, on Saturday to protest against job cuts.

Workers are now preparing to ballot for strikes. Staff and students held signs that read, "Stop the cuts," and, "Roehampton is losing its faculties."

UCU members from Brighton, Kingston, Goldsmiths and Royal Holloway universities and Croydon City, City and Islington and Hackney colleges brought solidarity to the protest.

Linda Cronin, Roehampton UCU union branch chair, told Socialist Worker they decided to hold the protest on a university open day. "We were approached by would-be students who want to apply for a course that will no longer exist anymore," she said.

Linda added that the cuts are ideological. "We've

looked into the universities' finances," she explained. "We don't see any need for them to make anyone redundant. These cuts follow the Tory ideology that some courses don't matter and others do."

In May, 226 workers received a letter from university management saying their jobs were at risk. Some workers have already taken voluntary redundancy. Others have been told they will have to reapply for their jobs in a shameful fire and rehire move.

Bosses have targeted courses in the arts, education, humanities and social sciences, life and health sciences, and psychology.

The university has also announced several courses will be closed.

Workers should vote yes to strikes—and other trade unionists should build solidarity with the fight at Roehampton.

QUEEN MARY UNIVERSITY

BOSSSES AT Queen Mary university in Tower Hamlets, east London, have threatened to close courses in retaliation for workers staging strikes and a marking and assessment boycott.

Principal Colin Bailey said he would close the

film studies course at the university in an email to workers.

Bailey explicitly wrote that Queen Mary university "can't take new students onto programmes where staff refuse to deliver the promised education."

COLLEGES

Fightback wins pay deal

COLLEGE WORKERS at the Capital City College Group (CCCG) in north London have won a significantly-improved pay deal after organising solid strikes last year.

UCU union members voted to accept the offer that will see a 9 percent increase for those earning under £30,000 a year.

Those who earn between £30,000 to £45,000 a year will have a 6 percent raise.

And hourly paid lectures will receive an increase in the hourly rate as well as a cost of living pay rise worth 15 percent in total.

The deal will mean holiday entitlements are the same across the colleges, with workers receiving three extra days of holiday.

Sean Vernell, UCU secretary for the college group, told Socialist Worker that while the deal isn't inflation-matching, it's significant for colleges.

"At the moment 40 colleges across the country are currently preparing to ballot over pay and workload," he said.

"This deal has certainly set the cat amongst the pigeons and shown that it is possible to win a pay rise."

Sean added that fighting back has forced management to back off from demanding a two-year pay deal.

"We told management we wouldn't settle unless they would reopen negotiations next year," he said. "Initially, they refused."

"But two days later they were forced to come back and said they would be prepared to negotiate for a pay rise next year."

Workers across further education should agitate for big strikes that can win inflation-busting pay rises in the autumn.

SCHOOLS

TEACHERS AND school workers at Lordswood Girls School in Birmingham began five days of strikes on Tuesday.

The NEU members, who are fighting against forced academisation, were set to

strike on Wednesday and Thursday and Tuesday and Wednesday of next week.

The NEU added, "Members have now been given no choice by Lordswood Girls' School but to take this action."

POST

Strikes at Royal Mail and Post Offices

ROYAL MAIL delivery office managers were set to strike for two days between Wednesday and Friday of next week over pay and job cuts.

Bosses want to cut 700 managers jobs and slash their pay by up to £7,000. The managers are Unite union members. It comes as a strike ballot over pay by workers in the CWU union is set to end on Tuesday of next week.

The CWU is also set to launch another strike ballot in a fight to defend jobs and conditions. Bosses want to push through

major changes, including moving work from delivery offices to designated parcel hubs.

Many CWU members rightly don't like managers, who have often been the face of workload-related bullying. But the disputes are both against bosses' plans to slash pay and jobs, and workers shouldn't cross picket lines.

■ WORKERS AT Crown Post Offices—the large, state owned branches—struck on Monday of this week—the latest action in a battle over pay. They were set

to be followed by a strike by Post Office logistics and admin workers on Thursday of this week.

The two days of action are the latest in a battle against a 3 percent increase—a massive real terms pay cut.

The CWU union members previously struck in June and May this year. But so far they have taken only one or two days of action, followed by weeks of talks. Longer, more sustained action—especially by logistics and admin workers who distribute cash and valuables to every Post Office—can break the deadlock.

TRANSPORT

More workers set to join rail pay battle

by SAM ORD

SOME 2,000 workers on Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) in the RMT union have voted to join the national rail dispute.

And at eight companies, train drivers in the Aslef union delivered overwhelming votes to join the action.

They're following the lead of 40,000 workers on Network Rail and 13 train operating companies who struck last month.

The result of a ballots workers in the TSSA union was also set to be announced as Socialist Worker went to press.

Yet RMT union leaders risk losing momentum by not calling new strike dates. Unity in action can deliver a blow to the bosses.

RMT leaders shouldn't put off action until all other unions have a mandate to strike. There are other problems with the union leaders' strategy.

The RMT is campaigning for a pay increase of just 7 percent—a 4.7 percent real terms cut.

At the union's annual general meeting last week a motion to introduce a set wage increase was defeated.

Nevertheless, many workers



PICKETS DURING last month's strike

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

want to see the union fight for an above inflation pay rise.

The GTR workers failed to meet the 50 percent threshold during the first national rail ballot. Now they have returned a 57.5 percent turnout with an 80 percent vote for action.

RMT general secretary Mick Lynch said, "Our members

were denied their democratic right to strike due to draconian ballot thresholds but having smashed through those at the second time of asking, they are raring to join our campaign."

He added, "We welcome Aslef and TSSA balloting their members for strike action.

If rail unions stay united

in our common struggle for pay justice, job security and decent working conditions, we cannot and will not be defeated."

With more workers looking set to join the fight, workers could win much more than a 7 percent pay increase. And it is urgent that union leaders call new strike dates.

COUNCILS

Where's Labour, ask traffic wardens in Wandsworth

TRAFFIC wardens working for outsourcer NSL in Wandsworth, south London, struck for another five days last week.

They have been out for a total of 11 days so far, fighting for better pay.

The strikers are demanding pay parity with wardens in the neighbouring borough of Merton, who earn £17.25 an hour—that's £6 an hour more.

They are employed directly by Merton council.

Wandsworth wardens believe that if they were taken in house it would actually save the council money.

One key question in the dispute has been the attitude of the council, now under Labour control for the first time since 1978.

They inherited a contract with NSL from the previous Tory regime. But it is due to expire in a couple of years.

This is a key test for the Labour-run council. It is the first strike they are facing, and they are embarrassed by it.

Council leader Simon Hogg and local Labour MP Rosena Allin-Khan were both happy to speak alongside striking cleaners at St George's hospital two miles down the road last month.

But there has been no sign of them or their colleagues on the wardens' picket line.

The strikers plan to walk out again at the end of July. They also need to ramp up pressure on the Labour council, and demand better from a party that their union has given tens of millions of pounds to over the years.

At the very least Labour should announce it will take the wardens back in house when the contract expires.

Ben Windsor

BINS

Welwyn workers' victory encourages them to fight

A GROUP of workers who walked out of their workplace in May against a bullying, sexist manager are set to ballot for strikes over pay.

The refuse workers are members of the Unite union and outsourced by Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council in Hertfordshire to Urbisher.

Action by around 100 workers forced bosses to stop employing the manager on a council contract.

The walkout was a real victory and showed that workers can make real change quickly when they act together.

Refuse worker Karl told Socialist Worker that the walkout has given workers

"confidence." "After the walkout, we heard that the company said it would sack 20 or 30 people if they walked out. But of course they couldn't do it because around 100 of us did. They thought they could do what they wanted but they can't."

"People joined the union after the walkout, and we've also been getting inspiration from other bin strikes across the country that are winning big."

Karl said that now more than ever, workers need to fight back.

He added that he believes that there'll be a big vote for strikes among refuse workers in the ballot set to start next week.

●Karl is a pseudonym

BUS DEPOTS

Merseyside drivers plan an indefinite walkout

HUNDREDS OF workers at a Stagecoach bus depot in Merseyside are set to walk out on indefinite strike in a fight over pay.

The workers, members of the Unite union, plan to strike from Wednesday 20 July.

They also have two days of strikes planned for Friday of this week and Monday of next week, and struck on Monday of last week.

The 370 drivers at the Gilmoor depot are paid just £12.69 an hour. Yet in 2021 the company made £32.9 million in profit.

●AROUND 900 bus workers employed by Arriva in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire are

balloting for strikes against an "outrageous" 4 to 6 percent pay increase—well below inflation.

Bosses' offer includes a 16.6 percent cut in overtime rates and an end to paid time for compulsory duties outside of driving.

Unite union general secretary Sharon Graham said, "Arriva is asking our members to take a huge cut in the value of their earnings. That is simply unacceptable."

The ballot, in Luton, Aylesbury, High Wycombe, Milton Keynes, Ware, Stevenage and Milton Keynes, will close on 10 August.

FERRIES

Summer of strike at sea

FERRIES THAT transport passengers from Southampton to Cowes in the Isle of Wight could face shutdown during the school summer holidays as workers strike against poverty pay.

The 120 workers are mostly paid minimum wage.

The Unite union said staff were "increasingly struggling" to pay rents, with some turning to food banks.

Workers were often away from home for days at a time and only paid the hours they work onboard the ferry, with no overnight subsidies provided for food or other expenses, it said.

Workers are set to strike on Wednesday 27 July. More strikes are planned on 1, 3, 5, 9, 11, 15, 17, 19, 26 and 29 August.

ROUND-UP

Reject deal to put profits before pay

BOSSSES AT Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) have reneged on an inflation-busting pay rise. The Unite union is wrongly going along with a worse offer.

Workers were last year promised a pay increase equivalent to the RPI rate of inflation plus 0.5 percent in 2022. But a letter from the joint negotiating committee, which is made up of bosses' and the union's representatives, said bosses can't afford it.

A new deal would include a £5,000 lump sum paid in August and a 6 percent increase. Workers should reject the offer and be ready to strike.

●ANTI-FASCISTS opposed Nazi Tommy Robinson in Telford, Shropshire, on Saturday.

Robinson is exploiting horrific local child sexual abuse scandals in an attempt to revive the far right.

NHS

Unison union threatens Tory government with ballot

UNISON, THE largest NHS union, has said it could ballot over pay.

Unison said last week that if the government does not publish the NHS's pay review body's recommendation before parliament breaks for summer, it will move towards a consultative ballot for industrial action.

Unison's health executive also says it will ballot if the government offers a below-inflation rise.

●PORTERS AND domestics in the GMB union at St George's hospital in south London have announced a further five days of strikes.

The workers are demanding compensation for a payroll change that left them out of pocket. They also want standard NHS pay and terms and conditions.

Strikes are set for this Sunday, followed by Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday next week, and Sunday 24 July.

SRI LANKAN REVOLT TOPPLES RULERS

by YURI PRASAD

THE SIMMERING rage of people in the streets of Sri Lanka has finally boiled over, sending the country's rulers into panic.

In defiance of a government curfew, thousands made their way to the capital to join a monster protest in Colombo last Saturday.

They commandeered busses and lorries that still had fuel, and packed into trains that could still run.

Once in the capital they joined hundreds of thousands of others furious at economic collapse and political corruption.

Together they demanded that “Gota Must Go”—a reference to the president Gotabaya Rajapaksa, and his family of government hangers on.

Barricades

In the centre of town, demonstrators built impromptu barricades to stop the police and military from breaking up the protests.

They even captured a water cannon, throwing the cops out of its cab and writing “give our stolen money back” on its side.

Not far away protesters smashed a commandeered military truck into the last



PROTESTERS STORM the presidential palace

gate between themselves and the president's mansion. Hundreds of people flooded in, gleefully occupying the luxury home that Rajapaksa had left in a hurry.

“Within two hours of starting, we were inside the house,” said Nuzly Hameem, who helped start the initial protest camp Galle Face Green back in April. “It still feels unreal.” Within

minutes of entering the mansion, some protesters were swimming in its pool while others worked out in the gym or lounged in the bedrooms.

Riffling through draws, one demonstrator proudly displayed what he said were a pair of the president's underpants.

From the apparent safety of a Sri Lankan naval

vessel at sea, Rajapaksa announced that he would resign this Wednesday.

By the evening the swarming rebels had moved on to the prime minister Ranil Wickremesinghe's house, which they set ablaze to cheers and chanting.

He too was forced to announce that he was prepared to step down in favour of a government of

national unity. Sunday turned into a day of celebration. Deepa Ranawara, her husband and their two children were among those enjoying the festive atmosphere.

Laughing, Deepa said she was unable to stand because her legs ached so much from walking 15 miles to join the protesters.

“Still, we are celebrating the event that happened

here,” she said. “People have suffered too much. Never in my wildest dreams did I think this could happen in Sri Lanka.”

“We eat maybe two times a day now. We don't even think about fish or meat,” she said.

The carnival atmosphere is well deserved, but cannot last.

The economic crisis is deepening as supplies of almost every type of essential goods runs out. And politicians and the broader ruling class are desperate to regain the initiative.

National

There is talk of a national government involving all the main parties, and perhaps fresh elections.

The main aim of any new administration will be to quell the protests and make a deal with the International Monetary Fund that will involve huge cuts and privatisation (see page 17).

All political parties are committed to this process. None can be counted to stand up for workers, small farmers and fishers, and the poor.

That's why it is vital that the movement that brought an end to the Rajapaksa dynasty prepares itself for even greater fights ahead.

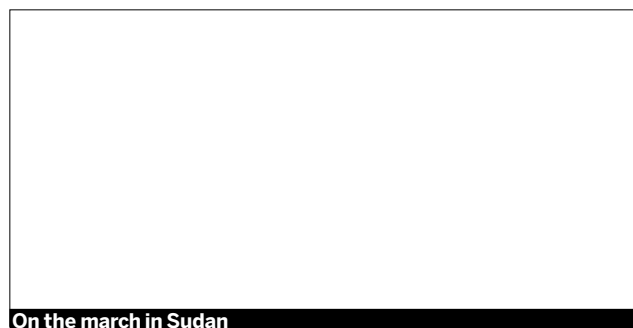
Sudanese movement keeps barricades up as the military manoeuvres

PROTESTERS IN Sudan marked Eid last weekend among the barricades at sit-ins in the capital Khartoum and Omdurman.

The mobilisations have continued in the face of coup leader General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan's ruse.

He claimed the military would make way for a civilian government last week, and “not participate” in talks facilitated by the United Nations and regional governmental bodies.

Mukhtar Atif, a member



On the march in Sudan

of the Bahri resistance committee at the sit-in in the north of Khartoum, slammed the army's manoeuvres. “We think the

statement from the army is just a political process and a play with words,” he said.

“When we say we want them to return to

barracks, it's not just about them leaving politics.”

Mukhtar said it was also about “making sure they don't have access to wealth that should be going to government coffers”.

Another protester at the Bahri sit-in, Waad Mohammad, added, “We want to end the military rule because a lot of people are suffering

“Since they took charge three years ago nothing has changed. Even with the army saying it's withdrawing from talks there's been no justice for

the protesters killed—so we're not going anywhere.”

Burhan hopes to strengthen the army's position through a Supreme Council of the Armed Forces so it can control any government that comes out of the talks.

The resistance committees, which are organising the protests, are local democratic structures that bring together activists.

But they need to grow into more than protest bodies and

become the basis of an alternative government to Sudan's rulers.

And this has to be linked to more workers' strikes.

The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and the notorious Rapid Support Forces (RSF) militia are major economic players in the country.

Taking them on—and the whole machinery of exploitation and state violence in Sudan—requires a fight to wrest political and economic power from all those at the top.